

# THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Supporters of Mark Curtis  
answer slander campaign

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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

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## Miners win victory, push back Peabody

BY JOHN HAWKINS

BIRMINGHAM, Alabama — After little more than a month on the picket line, some 7,000 members of the United Mine Workers of America on strike against Peabody Holdings Co. returned to work March 5 with a victory under their belts.

Joining them were 1,700 miners who struck for several days against individual mines of other coal companies that also belong to the Bituminous Coal Operators Association (BCOA). Only one day into the expansion of the strike, Peabody and the BCOA rushed to reverse course and sue for peace.

By agreeing to disclose the totality of its coal holdings to union negotiators and open discussions on the hiring of union members at its nonunion operations, the BCOA removed the main stumbling block to beginning real negotiations with the mine workers' union.

In return United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) members agreed to return to work under a 60-day extension of the 1988 contract, which expired February 1. The contract extension expires May 3.

The UMWA struck Peabody because of its refusal to provide the union information about its extensive holdings and leases to mine coal. At the outset of the strike, Peabody Coal president Sam Shiflett declared that his company would never agree to the union's demand because it "would result in a radical restructuring of the labor agreement."

While the three other major BCOA companies — Consolidation Coal Co., AMAX Industries, and Arch Mineral Corp. — agreed to go along with the union's demand, Peabody moved aggressively to open a



Miners on strike against Peabody Coal in Morganfield, Kentucky, just before scoring a victory against the coal bosses.

breach in the miners' ranks.

### Companies blink first

"The BCOA blinked first," one miner in Alabama told the *Militant*, reflecting union members' pride in their accomplishment. "It looks like we won round one," said another, noting the struggle that still lies ahead.

"We are now where we should have been

last June," UMWA president Richard Trumka told the press, "when we first approached the BCOA to begin contract talks."

"I am satisfied that compliance with this agreement will provide the UMWA with the tools we need to negotiate a new contract and enforce that contract once it's agreed upon."

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## Negotiations move forward in drive to end South African apartheid rule

BY STEVE CLARK

JOHANNESBURG, South Africa — The Multiparty Planning Conference held here March 5-6 "has been an unqualified success," said Cyril Ramaphosa, secretary-general of the African National Congress and head of the ANC's delegation. Ramaphosa was speaking at a press conference at the nearby World Trade Centre shortly after adjournment March 6.

"It has achieved its basic objective," Ramaphosa said, "which is the immediate resumption of multiparty negotiations."

With 26 delegations seated around a large circular table, the conference was by far the most inclusive gathering since the African National Congress initiated negotiations with the National Party government in 1990 to put an end to apartheid. Nineteen organizations attended two previous rounds of multiparty talks in December 1991 and May 1992, known as Codesa I and II (for the Convention for a Democratic South Africa).

Among the organizations at this conference that did not participate in Codesa are the Pan Africanist Congress, an anti-apartheid group unbanned along with the ANC in 1990; delegations of traditional leaders from several provinces and the Venda region; and two whites-only organizations that call for "Afrikaner self-determination" — the Conservative Party and Afri-

kaner Volksunie. An invitation had been extended to the Azanian People's Organization, but its central committee rejected appeals by the ANC leadership that it send a delegation.

### New talks begin within month

The conference decided that a new round of multiparty negotiations on substantive issues will begin no later than April 5. "Accepting that all the people in this country and the whole community of nations throughout the world look to us to move the country forward towards a nonracial, non-sexist, and full democratic future," the resolution stated, the organizations at the conference "commit ourselves, individually and collectively, to the resumption/commencement of multiparty negotiations within the next month, in order to move as speedily as possible toward the attainment of our primary objective, which is the drafting and adoption of a new Constitution for South Africa."

The resolution stipulates that each organization attending the upcoming talks will send two delegates and two advisers, and that "all participants are required to make an unqualified commitment to this process of negotiations as a prerequisite for their participation." The organization of the talks was assigned to the Facilitating Committee selected by the planning conference, made

up of the head of each of the 26 delegations.

Only the Conservative Party refused to endorse the resolution. The scope of agreement thus marked a fissure in the Concerned South Africans Group (Cosag) — a bloc between white supremacist groups, such as the Conservative Party and Afrikaner Volksunie, and African-based bourgeois forces, such as the Inkatha Freedom Party of Mangosuthu Buthelezi and the regimes in the Ciskei and Bophuthatswana "homelands."

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## Airdrops in Bosnia: fiasco for Washington

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

U.S. president Bill Clinton's "humanitarian" policy of parachuting pallets of food and medicine from 10,000 feet into eastern Bosnia has resulted in intensified fighting and rightist Serbian forces killing more Muslims in the besieged enclaves there.

As Bosnian civilians went in search of the airdropped supplies, many of which landed close to Serbian military positions, artillery shells from the Serb forces rained down upon them, injuring and killing many. Thousands fled to nearby snow-covered mountains.

According to Anders Levinsen, a representative of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in the eastern Bosnian town of Tuzla, 17,000 to 20,000 people have fled to a valley known as Konjevic Polje, where they are without shelter and exposed to almost continuous shelling. Among them are some 3,000 children and 1,500 wounded and sick people, who were reported to be camping in the open in deep snow around Konjevic.

Radovan Karadzic's Serbian Democratic Party forces killed hundreds of civilians

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## Int'l women's meeting opens in Havana

BY SARA LOBMAN  
AND JUDY WHITE

HAVANA, Cuba — A meeting titled "Cuban Women in the '90s" opened here March 7. The continent-wide gathering, which was organized to show solidarity with the Cuban revolution and bring together diverse forces in the region, drew 350 women from across Latin America, the Caribbean, and the United States.

The conference was called at a regional meeting of the Women's International Democratic Federation in São Paulo, Brazil, in June 1992. It is being hosted by the Federation of Cuban Women (FMC), the main women's rights organization on the island.

FMC president Vilma Espín explained in her remarks to the opening session that the conference had a continuity with pre-

Continued on Page 4

## The Clinton Presidency Challenges Facing Youth and Trade Unionists

These forums will coincide with national meetings of socialist trade unionists in the International Association of Machinists and the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union.

**SATURDAY, MARCH 13**

### Boston

Speaker: Frank Forrester  
National Committee,  
Socialist Workers Party  
Dinner 6 p.m., program 7 p.m.  
780 Tremont St.

Donation: dinner \$5, program \$4  
(617) 247-6772

### Los Angeles

Speaker: George Fyson  
Editor,  
Militant newspaper  
Dinner 6 p.m., program 7:30 p.m.  
2546-C W. Pico Blvd.

Donation: dinner \$5, program \$4  
(213) 380-9460





## 28,000 UN troops to Somalia

United Nations secretary-general Boutros Boutros-Ghali proposed March 3 that the formal transfer of command from the U.S.-led force in Somalia to a new UN force eventually comprising 28,000 troops take place May 1. This represents a significant increase over a previously projected UN force of 20,000. Some 5,000 U.S. troops will remain as part of that deployment.

A Turkish officer, Lt. Gen. Cevik Bir, will head the UN force, with U.S. Army Maj. Gen. Thomas Montgomery as his deputy.

Meanwhile, two U.S. marines face military hearings on whether they used excessive force in the shooting of two young Somalis last month. The case marks the first instance of legal action being taken against U.S. soldiers, who have been involved in almost daily shoot-outs with Somalis. One of the incidents being investigated involves the killing of a 13-year-old Somali boy who was just approaching a marine vehicle.

## Angolan talks collapse

Talks between the Angolan government and the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) collapsed March 1. UNITA representatives failed to show up for the negotiating session in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The meeting had been set up under UN auspices in an effort to halt the widening civil war in Angola.

UNITA forces led by Jonas Savimbi resumed their armed attacks in October. Savimbi refused to abide by the results of the September 29-30 parliamentary elections held in Angola that registered a victory for the governing Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA).

## Funds cut for eastern Germany

Many companies that bought eastern German state-owned enterprises are now re-evaluating their agreements as the German economy continues to decline. According to the Treuhandanstalt, the institution set up to organize the privatization and restructuring of eastern German firms, as many as 10 percent of its buyers are now trying to renegotiate their contracts. This agency, which was set up in 1990, had sold off 11,043 firms by the end of 1992, with 2,575 left to go.

The eastern region's industrial output has shrunk to 20 percent of its 1990 level. In



Hundreds of Cuban-Americans from Miami and other cities rallied near the White House February 26 to protest the U.S. trade embargo against Cuba. Leaders of the Antonio Maceo Brigade and the Alliance of Workers in the Community turned in petitions with 35,000 signatures demanding the embargo be lifted.

1993 companies based in western Germany are expected to further reduce the funds they had earmarked for investment in the eastern part of the country.

## Rightists gain in German election

The right-wing Republican Party made a strong showing in local elections in Germany March 7, winning 9 percent of the vote in Frankfurt and more than 8 percent throughout the western state of Hessen. The rightist gains came mainly at the expense of the Social Democrats, the main opposition party to Chancellor Helmut Kohl's ruling Christian Democrats.

The Republicans' central plank is opposition to immigrants. They call for the government to stop local officials from providing housing to immigrant workers, most of whom are now arriving from Romania and Bulgaria. Last May in Berlin, the Republicans won 10 percent of the vote. In local elections in 1989 the rightist party got less than 1 percent.

## Italian gov't mired in corruption

"The whole postwar edifice of Italy's political and economic structure seems in danger of collapse," wrote William Drozdiak in the *Washington Post* about the corruption scandal that has shaken Italy's government.

At least 800 people, including a quarter of the parliament's 630 members, have been notified they are under investigation for corruption. The scandals have affected municipal governments in more than 20 cities, including Rome, Venice, Naples, and Milan.

Former prime minister Bettino Craxi recently gave up his 16-year position as head of the Socialist Party, after coming under investigation on four bribery counts. Former Christian Democrat prime minister Ciriaco de Mita also resigned his post as head of the parliamentary commission for constitutional reform.

## Truce signed in Afghanistan

The leaders of two of Afghanistan's main rival factions agreed March 3 to share power for 18 months, then hold elections.

Since last April forces aligned with Afghan president Burhanuddin Rabbani have been battling Gulbuddin Hekmatyar for control of the country. Rocket attacks in the capital city of Kabul alone have killed an estimated 5,000 people, wounding many more, and flattening entire neighborhoods.

In a meeting held in Islamabad, Pakistan, Rabbani and Hekmatyar agreed to a cease-fire and to withdraw their heavy weapons out of range of Kabul. Rabbani would remain as president and Hekmatyar would become prime minister. The agreement still must be ratified by leaders of all 10 Muslim groups that had been involved in fighting to oust the Soviet-backed Kabul government a year ago.

## Canada's prime minister resigns

Brian Mulroney announced February 24 he was resigning as prime minister of Canada and as leader of the Conservative Party. He had held the top government post for the past eight and a half years. Mulroney's public approval ratings had sunk to as low as nine percent; Canada remains plagued by high unemployment and a three-year recession. The failure of his proposed constitutional reforms in an October referendum contributed to his fall.

## Canada to slash rail jobs

Canadian National Railways plans to eliminate 11,000 jobs in Canada and the United States over the next three years as part of a major overhaul of the country's freight-rail industry. The company, which currently employs 32,400 workers in Canada and 3,300 in the United States, plans to slash its work force by about 30 percent.

Paul Tellier, Canadian National's president and chief executive officer, indicated that he also plans to demand work-rule concessions from the railroad's labor unions. According to the *Wall Street Journal*, "A successful restructuring could make it possible for the Canadian government to consider privatizing Canadian National within five years."

## Boeing competes with Airbus

In a speech to Boeing aerospace workers in Washington state, U.S. president Bill Clinton blamed subsidies by European Community (EC) governments to Airbus for the announced layoffs of 28,000 Boeing employees over the next 18 months. Clinton threatened to retaliate against the European-based manufacturer if the EC does not reduce subsidies. Airbus is a European consortium with partner companies in France, Britain, Germany, and Spain.

In recent years Airbus has become the second-largest aircraft manufacturer, but Boeing still controls 60 percent of the world market for the manufacture of commercial jets.

## Alabama releases man held on death row for six years

An Alabama state court ordered the release of Walter McMillian March 2. The 46-year-old man, who is Black, had spent the last six years on death row because of perjured testimony and evidence withheld from his lawyers. McMillian was convicted in 1988 for the shooting death of an 18-year-old white female store clerk. Upon his arrest he was immediately sent to Alabama's death row, even before he was tried.

A jury sentenced McMillian to life in prison without parole. The trial judge, Robert Key, overruled the jury and condemned McMillian to die in the electric chair. All of the prosecution's three witnesses subsequently recanted their testimony.

After turning down four appeals, the Alabama Court of Criminal Appeals finally threw out McMillian's conviction. When asked if the decision to release him from prison restored his faith in the judicial system, McMillian replied: "No. Not at all."

— BRIAN WILLIAMS

## THE MILITANT

*Eyewitness reports on the unfolding revolution for a democratic South Africa*

'Militant' reporting teams in South Africa continue to tell the truth about the giant strides forward being taken by the revolutionary democratic movement under the leadership of the African National Congress in the fight for the first-ever one-person one-vote elections for a constituent assembly.

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## The Militant

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Editor: GEORGE FYSON

Labor Editor: PAUL MAILHOT

Business Manager: Brian Williams

Editorial Staff: Derek Bracey, Naomi Craine, Estelle DeBates, Frank Forrestal, Martin Koppel, Sara Lobman, Argiris Malapanis, Brian Williams.

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# South African ANC youth leaders on tour

BY GREG MCCARTAN

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Young leaders of the African National Congress (ANC) Youth League of South Africa and of student struggles in that country began a 16-city solidarity tour of the United States here at the beginning of March. The tour will last six weeks.

"After 81 years of struggle we'll have a chance to vote in nationwide elections for the first time," Clayton Lillienfeldt said. He was referring to the fight led by the African National Congress (ANC) for the first one-person, one-vote balloting for a constituent assembly, to be held within the next year.

"But in order to defeat apartheid, we need your support," said Thabo Mzilikazi, speaking at a meeting of students at George Washington University. "Simply addressing the educational needs of youth in our country and preparing for the elections will be a massive project."

Lillienfeldt and Mzilikazi, who both serve in leadership positions in student organizations, are two of six youths on tour. Also touring are student leaders Eldred de Klerk, a leader of the ANC Youth League in the Western Cape and of the community-based Civic Association, and Lundi Rasmeni. Ntombenhle Sibeko, national leader of the Youth League, and Lulu Johnson, the league's deputy president, will be joining the tour March 8.

Sibeko and Lillienfeldt will tour the West Coast and Midwest beginning in Portland, Oregon, March 8. East Coast tour stops for the other anti-apartheid fighters will include Atlanta; Baltimore; Birmingham, Alabama; Boston; Greensboro, North Carolina; Newark, New Jersey; and New York City.

The 1993 Student-To-Student Anti-Apartheid Empowerment Tour was initiated at a workshop of youth and student activists

at a November "Conference in Support of the African National Congress and Other Democratic Forces in South Africa." That New York meeting drew individuals and representatives from a range of organizations seeking to build solidarity with the battle to bring down apartheid.

"We are not about reforming the government in our country," de Klerk told the student meeting. "We want to transform it. We are on an accelerated course of fighting to restructure our country in order to address what apartheid has done."

In the current negotiations with the ANC, the South African regime hopes to "entrench minority privileges in the constitution and Bill of Rights," de Klerk said, something the ANC rejects. Instead, the ANC is fighting for a government of majority rule.

"We need a constituent assembly," he said, "that is representative of all the people. We in the ANC are fighting for a country that is for all of us, and we must see a constituent assembly in order to address the economic decline and needs of the people."

Students and youth at high school and campus meetings have asked the anti-apartheid fighters many questions: What are the causes of the violence in the country? Will the ANC simply take power and not seek to deepen the struggle of millions in the country? What kind of educational system is the democratic movement fighting for? What can young people in the United States do to help advance the freedom struggle?

"We want to be able to provide for the basic needs and aspirations of the masses of people in our country," Lillienfeldt said. "South Africa is a start. We want to be a symbol of hope of the peoples of Africa and the world."

Around the United States a broad range of



Militant/Margrethe Siem

Youth in Ciskei, South Africa, rallying in support of African National Congress.

student organizations and anti-apartheid groups have joined in support of the tour. The meeting at George Washington University (GWU), for example, was organized by the university students' program board. It was cosponsored by the Black People's Union, the Council of International Students, the International Student Society, and the GWU African Community.

Similar sponsorship has been garnered at Howard University, where a student reception took place March 5. A citywide meeting will be held on that campus March 11. Tour

meetings will take place at American University, George Mason University, and Trinity College.

The anti-apartheid fighters have also spoken to meetings of students at six local high schools, building support for a Global Exchange program that links schools in the United States with those in South Africa.

Fundraising and informational meetings are also being sponsored here by the A. Philip Randolph Institute, the Washington Office on Africa, and Africare. Meetings with elected public officials and unionists are also planned.

Eldred de Klerk summed up the George Washington meeting by saying that all those who support the struggle for a united and nonracial South Africa "need to harness the resources for the elections so the mass of people in our country can put in place a democracy that really works."

"We must keep pressure on the South African government and work so that the mass of people can take their rightful place in the economic, social, and political arena," he stressed.

## Clinton defends forced return of Haitians

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

In arguments before the U.S. Supreme Court March 2, the Clinton administration defended the policy of seizing on the high seas and forcibly returning Haitian refugees who flee military repression in their country. Former president George Bush began the forced return of Haitian refugees last May.

Last year a federal appeals court ruled that Washington's repatriation policy, which denies refugees an asylum hearing, violates U.S. immigration law. The Bush administration appealed this decision to the Supreme Court and obtained a stay of execution permitting the enforcement of this policy until the Court issued its ruling.

During the election campaign Clinton condemned Bush's policy as "cruel" and illegal. But he subsequently changed his position. "Maybe I was too harsh in my criticism of him," said Clinton.

Since the Haitian military overthrew elected president Jean-Bertrand Aristide in September 1991, more than 40,000 Haitians have attempted to flee the country by boat.

In defending Clinton's new policy on Haiti, U.S. secretary of state Warren Christopher stated, "I don't suppose you'd want anybody to keep a campaign promise if it was a very unsound policy."

Clinton made the decision to turn back Haitians to save lives, said Deputy National Security Adviser Samuel Berger in an appearance on the "McNeil-Lehrer" news show. Twenty U.S. Coast Guard ships are currently stationed 13 miles off Haiti's shores.

In presenting the Clinton administration's arguments before the Supreme Court, Deputy Solicitor General Maureen Mahoney claimed that under immigration law the president had emergency powers to conduct such a forced repatriation policy.

"They want the power without the restraint," stated Yale University law professor Harold Koh, who argued before the court that the government could not invoke immigration laws as justification for picking up these refugees and then not be bound by the restraints contained in those laws.

Like his predecessor, Clinton says Haitians should apply for asylum in their own country. He claims to have improved this operation by increasing the number of U.S. immigration agents in Haiti from three to seven and reducing the time it takes to

process the applications from several months to a week.

However, according to attorney Koh, there is a backlog of 15,000 applications. The sole processing center in Port-au-Prince places prospective refugees in the spotlight. It is located near the National Palace and police headquarters.

Ousted Haitian president Aristide criti-

cized the current U.S. policy, saying it was a "big contradiction" for Washington to prevent Haitians from fleeing their country while allowing foreign ships to flout the economic embargo against Haiti and deliver oil to the government.

Aristide, who is to meet with Clinton March 16, called on the U.S. president to set a deadline for his return to power.

## Will U.S. government give Haitian hijacker different treatment from Cuban defector?

BY JANET MCGUINN AND ROXANNE SÉGUIN

MIAMI — Woody Marc Edouard, a Haitian who hijacked a plane to this city, was released on bond February 24 after federal prosecutors asked U.S. magistrate William Turnoff to let him free until he stands trial.

Twenty-four-year-old Edouard was charged with aircraft piracy after he hijacked a plane at gunpoint from Cap-Haïtien, on the northern coast of Haiti, to Miami February 17. If convicted, he faces 20 years in federal prison.

The case is being followed very closely by many who say Haitian refugees are treated differently than Cuban refugees. Discussions at work places in Miami broke out on what will happen to Edouard. Assessing the move by prosecutors to release Edouard, the *Miami Herald* wrote, "The government denies it, but some Haitians and defense attorneys believe prosecutors wanted to counter perceptions that Cubans are favored over Haitians."

The 1966 Cuban Adjustment Act assumes that Cuban immigrants are political refugees. They can automatically apply for a green card one year and one day after arriving in the United States. Cuban refugees are not held at the detention centers used for Haitian refugees and others but are released to relatives by the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) after questioning.

In December 1992 Cuban pilot Carlos Canicio Porcel hijacked a civilian plane to Miami. The flight was on its way to Varadero beach in Cuba. The Cuban security guard on the plane was tackled, tied up, and drugged. As of now no charges have been filed against

the pilot. He and all the passengers were released after one day of detention.

Edouard told the press that he was fleeing repression by the Haitian military government, which ousted the democratically elected government of Jean-Bertrand Aristide in 1991. He felt threatened for his life. Edouard, who was a security guard for a travel agency in Port-au-Prince, explained that he has "always been a militant" and a strong supporter of Aristide.

Many people have come to his support, offering Edouard a job or a place to stay. Several dozen supporters attended his hearing.

Meanwhile, repression continues in Haiti. On February 25 Haitian monsignor Willy Romelus was beaten by a mob following a funeral mass for the 600 or more victims of the disaster on the *Neptune*, a ferryboat that sank February 17 on its regular trip from Jérémie to Port-au-Prince.

Romelus is one of many who have denounced the government for the accident. This condemnation has also been echoed by Haitians in Miami. At a meeting of the local Haitian solidarity organization Veye Yo, leaders pointed to the Haitian government's negligent maintenance of the ferry and the lack of other means of transportation in the Jérémie area.

The United Nations investigator on Haiti, appointed by the UN Human Rights Commission, issued a report from Geneva February 25. "The human rights situation in Haiti has deteriorated appreciably during 1992," the report stated. "The constitution is not in force . . . citizens are defenseless in the face of arbitrary action by state agents."

Abuses listed included "deaths, disap-

pearances and murders . . . arbitrary detention, torture, the extortion of protection money from citizens by security forces . . . and police repression of all anti-government protest."

At Guantánamo Bay, Cuba, 267 Haitian refugees held by the U.S. government are starting their fifth week of a hunger strike to protest the treatment they have received. They are barred from entering the United States because, according to the government, they tested positive for HIV, the virus that causes AIDS. The Senate recently voted to reaffirm the restriction that bars HIV-infected immigrants from the United States.

Jesse Jackson and Olden Polynice, a Haitian-born player on the Detroit Pistons basketball team, recently went on a hunger strike in solidarity with the people of Haiti. On January 5 Polynice had attempted to visit Haitians being held at the Krome Detention Center in Miami who were on a hunger strike against conditions there. INS guards banned him from visiting the detainees. In an interview on ABC-TV news the basketball player said, "As soon as [President Bill] Clinton got elected everything he was saying about Haiti went out the window. Now Clinton accepts the policy he was denouncing."

The day Polynice visited Krome was the same day 352 Haitian refugees arrived in Miami on a freighter that was then seized by U.S. authorities. The refugees were sent to detention centers. "The freighter's arrival prompted a statement by Florida Gov. Lawton Chiles, who urged the incoming Clinton administration to send a prompt, 'unmistakable signal' to discourage further illegal immigration," wrote the *Miami Herald*.



# Sales teams step up efforts in coal mining areas

The United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) scored a victory in its strike against Peabody Coal. As the miners' struggle against the U.S. coal barons continues, workers, students and other supporters of the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* are stepping up the distribution of these working-class papers throughout the coalfields. Sales and reporting teams are on their way to mines in Alabama, West Virginia, Pennsyl-

copies of the paper.

"In Shawneetown, Illinois, when the *Militant* distribution team went door-to-door selling the paper, one person apparently called the police in this small town to find out who we were. The police called the union strike office and spoke to the president of one of the striking UMWA locals. He told them that the *Militant* supports the strike and the cops should not interfere with

## The 'Militant' gets around

vania, Illinois, and elsewhere.

Participants in sales teams to coal-mining communities report that the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* are receiving an excellent response from miners and other supporters of their fight.

Stu Singer, just back from a two-week *Militant* sales and reporting team to the coalfields in southern Illinois, southwestern Indiana, and western Kentucky, filed the following report:

"Altogether we sold 150 single copies of the *Militant*, 15 subscriptions, and 4 copies of the Pathfinder book *The Eastern Airlines Strike*. Miners took the *Militant* seriously.

"Miners we spoke with after they read through the paper saw the *Militant* as an ally in their fight because of its extensive and accurate coverage. 'Strike solidarity and public opinion are very important to us,' a miner at a Peabody mine picket shack told us.

"Thanks for being here. We need all the support we can get," said a truck driver making a delivery to the Brushy Creek mine near Harrisburg, Illinois.

"During a shift change at the Island Creek Ohio 11 mine in nearby Uniontown, Kentucky, of the 50 miners who drove out from the midnight shift, 14 bought copies of the *Militant*. A few days earlier, 20 miners going in for the day shift at the Wabash mine in Illinois bought

the sales. The cops backed off."

Reports from these coalfield teams indicate that miners are interested not just in the *Militant's* truthful coverage of their fight, but in broader political issues as well, such as Clinton's attacks on entitlement programs and the democratic revolution in South Africa.

Supporters in Pittsburgh are planning to step up their efforts to reach miners at nearby coal mining communities. Sheila Ostrow reports that several all-day teams are in the works to sell at portals and door-to-door in areas where miners were on strike. A team from Pittsburgh visited two portals last week and sold nine copies of the *Militant*.

Supporters from Salt Lake City, who traveled two hours for a sale at a coal mine in Sunnyside, Utah, were well received. During the afternoon shift change five miners purchased the *Militant* and several took back issues of the paper.

"Almost every miner passing the team took a leaflet with an earlier reprint of a *Militant* article on the Peabody strike," reported team members Nelson González and Dan Priest. "There are approximately 150 miners working at this mine under the old contract, which has been extended for a year. A number of



*Militant* sales team at Island Creek Ohio 11 coal mine received a good response from miners for accurate coverage of Peabody fight.

miners expressed anger at the extension, pointing to the need for changes in the cost-of-living and job security provisions in the contract."

Supporters of the socialist papers in New York, who have thus far sent in 13 *Militant* renewals, are organizing special sales teams and renewal calling as part of their effort to help publicize the upcoming tour of two leaders of the African National Congress Youth League from South Africa.

Juliette Montauk from New York reports that supporters there have also put the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* in the hands of workers involved in some important local strikes. At the Domino Sugar plant in Brooklyn, five striking workers on the picket line bought the *Militant*. Two workers who are on strike at the STC garment shop in Queens, fighting to win recognition of the International

Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, subscribed to *Perspectiva Mundial* at a showing of the video *The Frame-up of Mark Curtis* held at the home of one of the strikers.

"I like the critical spirit of *Perspectiva Mundial*," said one reader who decided to renew for a year after a phone conversation with supporters in Los Angeles. Another Los Angeles reader stated, "*Perspectiva Mundial* is the first magazine I've found that covers world events. I especially liked the article on Bosnia."

Through phone calls and visits to subscribers, supporters of the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* have been having excellent results in the month-long subscription renewal campaign.

This drive, which runs from February 20 through March 20, aims to

sign up for renewals at least 10 percent of the 2,770 *Militant* and 530 *Perspectiva Mundial* readers who took out subscriptions to these publications during the international circulation campaign late last year. Midway through the drive, the business office has received 130 *Militant* subscription renewals and 3 to *Perspectiva Mundial*.

"We're getting into great discussions with people we call on the big issues taken up in the *Militant*, like South Africa and Social Security," reports Greg McCartan from Washington, D.C. "Three people have come to *Militant* Labor Forums as a result of political discussions begun through renewal calling."

*Militant* supporters in New Zealand have obtained 14 subscription renewals, reports Michael Tucker. In addition, at sales and literature tables set up on campuses in Auckland, Wellington, and Christchurch, they sold 14 *Militant* subscriptions and 103 single copies over a two-week period. "The main interest among new readers was in South Africa, Yugoslavia, Malcolm X, and the economic crisis," said Tucker.

"Supporters of the Communist League election campaign in Australia traveled from Sydney to Melbourne to participate in the one-day strike and demonstration against the Victoria state government's attack on union rights," reports Ron Poulsen (see article on back page). "Thirty-six copies of the *Militant* were sold at the Melbourne demonstration. The team found particular interest in the *Militant's* eyewitness reports on the fight for an interim government of national unity in South Africa."

— BRIAN WILLIAMS

# Airdrops in Bosnia are a fiasco for Washington

Continued from front page

after seizing control of the town of Cerska, which had been subjected to a 10-month siege and was one of the targets of the U.S. airdrops. The more than 20,000 people who lived in Cerska fled for the mountains and other nearby towns. The UN military commanders in Bosnia are now seeking to set up "safe passage" routes for civilians fleeing the Muslim communities of Cerska, Srebrenica and Zepa. Heavy Serb shelling was reported in Srebrenica March 7.

Rightist Serbian forces have also stepped up the "ethnic cleansing" of the Muslim and Croatian communities of Glamoc and Bosanska Kostajnica in northwestern Bosnia near the Croatian border.

Commenting on the Bosnia policy fiasco of the Clinton administration, Stephen Rosenfeld wrote in a *Washington Post* column entitled "Mercy Flights, Merciless Results" that the airdrop relief mission "has become an instrument of the ethnic cleansing it was meant to prevent."

"American airdrops over Bosnia may have cost more lives than they saved," said the British newspaper *The Independent* in a March 4 editorial. "If there is any benefit, apart from feeding a few lucky ones, it is that the credibility of the United States is now as much at stake as that of the Europeans and the United Nations."

In a news conference March 5, Clinton strongly defended the airdrops over Bosnia and vowed to step them up. Cargo planes will soon begin doubling or even tripling the volume of supplies they are dropping.

A few days earlier U.S. defense secretary Les Aspin proclaimed the airdrop operation a "great success," indicating that it was therefore going to be suspended. He was promptly overruled by Clinton, who declared that the flights would continue as planned.

According to the *New York Times*, Gen. Colin Powell, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, "continues to favor a short operation." Aspin's public declaration that the relief flights were to be halted reflected the Pentagon's cautious approach to U.S. military involvement in this conflict, said the *Times*.

The government of Russia has now agreed to participate in the airdrop operation. Its planes will be flying out of the Rhein-Mein airfield in Germany, the same NATO base from which U.S. flights are being launched. The Clinton administration has been actively seeking Russian president Boris Yeltsin's involvement in this project. In fact, Washington is looking for an alliance with Moscow to maintain a de facto division of Bosnia. This serves U.S. interests vis-à-vis those of their imperialist rivals, like the government of Germany, which has a bigger stake in Croatia.

Moscow has been most supportive of the Serb forces in the conflict and has been waging a campaign to lift economic sanctions against Serbia.

Clinton has promised to take steps to tighten the economic embargo against Serbia. Despite the tough talk, however, the U.S. Navy, whose ships are supposedly enforcing a naval blockade against Serbia and Montenegro in the Adriatic Sea, has no plans to get involved in seizing vessels purportedly flouting the sanctions.

At the end of February, the Clinton administration, in what it described as a test case for the embargo, demanded the apprehension of a Greek-owned ship that recently delivered goods to Yugoslavia. The ship's captain had signaled that the vessel — on its way to Slovenia — was in distress and needed to make an emergency stop in Montenegro. There, the ship delivered a supply of petroleum coke, according to Washington. Italian warships briefly seized the ship

but soon after let it go. Despite protests by Washington demanding its seizure, U.S. naval forces in the area took no action to interdict the vessel.

During the presidential election campaign, Clinton called for bombing Serbian airfields and condemned George Bush for not using military force in Bosnia. Since assuming office, however, Clinton has backed away from

his campaign proclamations.

Many newspaper columnists continue to blast Clinton for this policy shift. "Clinton should re-read his old speeches," was the title of a nationally syndicated column by former UN ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick. She urged the U.S. president to "deliver humanitarian assistance by force if necessary," and "enforce the no-fly ban over Bosnia."

## Women's conference opens in Cuba

Continued from front page

vious meetings of Latin American and Caribbean women over the past decade. In 1982, she reminded the gathering, the Continental Front Against Intervention (Frente Continental) came out of a meeting in Nicaragua organized to defend the revolution in that country from increasing attacks by the United States. In 1985, a conference of women in the region gathered in Havana to discuss the growing debt crisis in the Third World.

Espín noted that the solidarity and exchange of experiences at earlier conferences is even more important today. "The new world order is a bad joke," she said. For the people of Latin America it has meant more hunger, more children who die of curable diseases, less education, and intensified exploitation, she explained.

Welcoming remarks were made by Doris Tijerino of the Continental Front, Dora Carcaño of the Women's International Democratic Federation, Ruth Neto of the Organization of Pan-African Unity, and Eunice Santana of the World Council of Churches, among others.

Following the opening session, a panel of Cuban leaders who are women discussed the character of the U.S. economic embargo

against Cuba and its impact on the daily lives of Cuban women. Speakers included Olga Miranda, advisor to the minister of Foreign Relations on legislative matters; Mariluz Hanel, director of the foreign affairs department of the Ministry of Commerce; Nancy Fernández Rodríguez, director of a research center for sugarcane by-products; and Yolanda Ferrer, general secretary of the FMC.

Ferrer explained that the embargo hits women in Cuba especially hard, since most women carry a double burden, working a job and then doing the bulk of the housework. It is women who bear the brunt of preparing meals when little food is available. Their labors are intensified the most by shortages of soap, electricity cuts, the lack of transportation, and the need to improvise clothing.

"The shortages are very difficult," she said, but "we resist because we have lived through capitalism and we know what it means."

The conference is scheduled to continue through March 10. Special sessions are planned that will take up health and education in Cuba. One entire day of the conference will be devoted to a discussion establishing a new solidarity network.



# 'Nothing has swayed me from my belief that Mark Curtis is unjustly imprisoned'

## Supporters of framed-up unionist speak out against slander campaign

BY SELVA NEBBIA

Supporters of the fight for justice for Mark Curtis have launched a campaign to win new support for his case. At the same time, they have begun to answer attempts, made by those who claim Curtis is guilty, to pressure endorsers of his case to end their backing of the defense effort.

The drive was launched in January by the Mark Curtis Defense Committee, based in Des Moines, Iowa, where Curtis was framed up. It aims to organize to get letters from prominent endorsers of his defense committee explaining in their own words "the facts of the frame-up against him and why unionists, women's rights fighters, and other political activists should join in Curtis's fight for justice."

A political activist and union fighter, Curtis was framed up on false charges of rape and burglary in March 1988. Having been convicted on those charges, he is now serving a 25-year prison sentence.

In a recent letter addressed to the supporters of the Mark Curtis Defense Committee, Priscilla Schenk and Hazel Zimmerman, two of the leaders of the international defense effort, explain where the case stands today.

They note that while Curtis was denied parole at his hearing last November, "the cumulative pressure of our international parole fight, Mark's exemplary personal conduct in prison, the victory he won last January in his lawsuit challenging his brutal beating by Des Moines police on the night of his arrest in 1988, and the length of time he has served behind bars — now more than 4 years — all combine to make it more difficult for the parole board to justify keeping him in prison. . . .

"Other opponents of Curtis's fight for justice continue their efforts to smear Curtis and his supporters," notes the defense committee. "Among those leading the charge is Mary Bertin, chairperson of the Civil Rights Committee of the Boston Branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People."

Bertin and her backers, the letter explains, "have been calling endorsers of the defense committee, harassing them and insisting they remove their support or be branded publicly as 'racists' and 'sexists.'" Zimmerman and Schenk report that several dozen endorsers have withdrawn their support for Curtis as a result of this slander campaign, and include a copy of Bertin's letter for the information of supporters.

In a letter addressed "Dear Endorser," Bertin states, "In 1989 Mark Curtis, a member of the Socialist Workers Party, was convicted of violently raping an African-American girl who was barely 15 years old. . . . Since his conviction, the Socialist Workers Party has worked hard to obtain his release and has lobbied members of progressive

organizations throughout the country to join the Mark Curtis Defense Committee.

"In some cases, the Defense Committee has simply told potential supporters that Mark Curtis was a victim of police brutality — without mentioning that he was convicted for his assault and rape of a child. In other cases, the Defense Committee has said that Mark Curtis was framed. In neither instance has the Defense Committee told its endorsers the truth. . . .

"I am therefore asking you to have your name removed from the list of Endorsers of the Mark Curtis Defense Committee." Bertin also sent endorsers a number of articles attacking the defense effort. For copies of this and other material, please write to the Mark Curtis Defense Committee (see ad on this page).

Following are excerpts of letters from some of those who have endorsed the Mark Curtis case, explaining why they continue to support his fight for justice.

\* \* \*

### Edna Griffin Iowa Women's Hall of Fame, Des Moines, Iowa.

"I became interested in the Mark Curtis case because there was something strange with a white man being charged with raping a young Black woman. I attended every session of the trial and became convinced of his innocence. . . .

"It is clear to me that Mark Curtis's concern about the Mexican workers in the plant made him a dangerous man. It is an example of his firm conviction that people are created equal. In my opinion, Mark Curtis is unusual in how clearly he sees that race need not separate one person from another. This is why I continue to support him.

"It is clear in my mind that the charge of rape of a teenage Black girl is necessary to divert our attention from how clearly Mark Curtis sees all people as one regardless of race, color, or creed.

"The charge of rape has been used against Black men and now is turned against a white, union man. What other white men have been charged with rape against a Black woman?

"At the age of 82, I see Mark Curtis as a man of integrity. It is for this reason, I am a firm supporter of Mark Curtis."



Militant  
Andile Yawa (right), leader of the African National Congress Youth League, visiting Mark Curtis, August 1992.

### Angela Sanbrano Executive Director, Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (CISPES).

"I continue to support the ongoing struggle to release Mark Curtis from prison. The circumstances surrounding Mark's case raise a lot of questions in my mind as to the motive behind his arrest. At the time, Mark was involved in defending the rights of immigrant workers in a case where the INS [Immigration and Naturalization Service] and the federal authorities violated the rights of the workers by storming into the plant and taking 17 workers off the line in clear violation of their rights. Mark was helping organize the protests that eventually forced the authorities to drop the charges against the workers.

"Mark was brutally beaten and racist remarks were made to him, such as 'You're a Mexican lover just like you love those coloreds.' In the movement to defend civil rights, workers' rights and the rights of the oppressed, the working class and the poor, we have thousands of examples of attempts to silence people by putting them in prison. I believe that Mark Curtis is a case in point.

"I am hopeful that the Committee's work will result in Mark's release and exoneration."

### Richard Trujillo Vice-president, Amalgamated Transit Union Local 265, San Jose, California.

"This letter reaffirms the commitment of numerous ATU-265 members in support of Mark Curtis.

"Both the local president, William McLean, and myself, Richard Trujillo, vice-president, and many others were among the first to sign up pledging support to Mark. Our position has not and will not change.

"Mark continues to be an inspiration worldwide because the battles against brutality and exploitation he helped lead, before his victimization by the now discredited Des Moines police and District Attorney, have continued even after his frame-up and unjust incarceration. Mark remains an active defender of women's rights, prisoners' rights, undocumented workers, trade unionists, and many others. In so doing Mark sets a courageous example; hence, the additional punishment — the outrageous delay of his parole.

"It is easy, then, to understand why internationally respected and powerful voices against oppression, we refer here to members of the African National Congress and the South African National Union of Mineworkers, lend their names and support to Mark Curtis. They recognize, in struggle, one of their own. And as the ANC and mineworkers demonstrate daily, solidarity must have substance; like Mark they don't back down or back off. For South Africans fighting apartheid, the struggle continues wherever and whatever their circumstances — including lengthy imprisonment. What top South African leader has not spent years

in prison, set-up, framed-up?

"The weak, fainthearted and unprincipled rarely understand all this much less render support, like Buthelezi of South Africa, Bernard Coard of Grenada and Jonas Savimbi of Angola, those who pose as opponents of oppression, they are always ready to cut a deal or go behind the backs of the people to further their own agenda. Predictably, they end up collaborating with the oppressor.

"They echo their victimizers. We have these types in North America too. We are all too familiar with this ilk and their operations. The task is to expose them and hasten their inevitable failure.

"Deepening and accelerating the defense of Mark Curtis, a union brother, helps accomplish this and much more.

"We say parole Mark Curtis now!"

### Chris Spotted Eagle Producer/Director, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

"I, like many other citizens, have been protesting the unjust case of Mark Curtis for the past several years, and I continue to do so. To date, nothing has swayed me from my belief that he has been unjustly imprisoned. There is still no truthful evidence showing that Mark raped the young black woman, Demetria Morris.

"I believe the police officer who says he caught Mr. Curtis with his pants down at the site of the alleged crime is lying, just like he lied about the other cases in the past. The so-called evidence against Mark is not credible and smacks of fabrication, conspiracy and fascism. . . .

"The trial was not impartial. I, as an American Indian, know very well that unfair trials occur under the judicial systems. The historical relationship between Indians and American governments proves it.

"Mark Curtis was and remains a disciplined and dedicated believer in social justice. He has devoted his life to fighting racism and sexism. His vilification as a criminal is propaganda to serve certain government and business interests to keep him locked up, in reality, as a political prisoner. This is a democratic society and he should be freed immediately."

### Jean-Jacques Kirkyacharian Movement Against Racism and for Friendship Among Peoples (MRAP), Paris, France.

"The MRAP thanks you for your letter dated January 19, 1993. I have read it attentively. I wish to congratulate you for also enclosing annex documents challenging your action.

"Our position is simple and is based on principles. Even if it were to be confirmed that M.C. did act unwisely, he would nonetheless remain a victim of antiunion and racist repression.

"Indeed the rape charge might very well be the result of a stratagem, a trap into which M.C. might have been lured; his would not be the first case of this kind. . . .

"Besides, M.C. could easily have been released on parole. But what the pressure on him is aimed at is his admitting rape, that is to say that the purpose, beyond this, is to bring a discredit on him as a militant.

"Having nothing in common whatsoever with the SWP, I am thus all the more at ease to deplore the fact that the Boston NAACP combines their opinion about this affair and an attack against this party. Perhaps they see mainly the image of a young Black girl raped by a white man, and that makes them lose their head and their sense of equity? Anyhow, I find it unpleasant that they assert that 'M.C. is a violent rapist.'

"For these reasons the MRAP will not withdraw from the list of the endorsers."

\* \* \*

Letters in support for Mark Curtis's fight for justice can be sent to the Mark Curtis Defense Committee, Box 1048, Des Moines, IA 50311. Fax: (515) 243-9869.

## Literature available from the Mark Curtis Defense Committee

**The Frame-up of Mark Curtis** by Margaret Jayko. The story of Mark Curtis, a unionist and fighter for immigrant rights who is serving a 25-year sentence in an Iowa prison on trumped-up rape charges. 71 pp., \$5 Order from Pathfinder, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014. (Please include \$3 for postage and handling.)

**Video: On Trial.** Television show with scenes from Curtis's trial. \$15.

**State of Iowa v. Mark Stanton Curtis.** Transcript of September 1988 jury trial proceedings that found Curtis guilty of rape and burglary. 446 pp., \$30.

**The Stakes in the Worldwide Political Campaign to Defend Mark Curtis** by John Gaige. Explains the political background to Curtis's case, the frame-up, and unfair trial. 25 pp., \$1.

**Video: The Frame-up of Mark Curtis.** Produced by Hollywood director Nick Castle. This effective 49-minute documentary has clips from TV news broadcasts on Curtis's fight for justice; scenes from the trial; and interviews with Curtis, his wife, Kate Kaku, and others. Available in English or Spanish on VHS, Beta, and PAL for the cost of reproduction and shipping. \$15.

For these and other materials (except for pamphlet by Margaret Jayko, see above) write or call the Mark Curtis Defense Committee, P.O. Box 1048, Des Moines, IA 50311. Phone (515) 246-1695. Bulk quantities are available. Many of these are also available in Spanish. Payments should accompany orders; make out checks to Mark Curtis Defense Committee. Please allow two weeks for delivery.



# 'Peabody underestimated us,' say miners

BY STU SINGER

MORGANFIELD, Kentucky — The year Kenneth Mayberry was born, his 40-year-old grandfather lost both legs in a mine accident. That was in 1936. "I realize how they fought to organize these mines. It was a battle. I'm reaping benefits they won for me," he explained in an interview here February 28. Mayberry, on strike against Peabody Coal, was speaking just two days before the miners scored a victory in their battle against the coal giant and began returning to work.

"My grandfather was killed by two scabs on a Christmas eve in the 1920s," said Bill Melloy, another miner. "They were waiting for him when he left a bar in Sturgis," a town near here. Melloy, 61, works with Mayberry at Peabody's Camp mine complex.

"Peabody underestimated us, just like Pittston did," Don Garrett told us, referring to the 1989-90 coal miners' strike against Pittston. He is recording secretary of United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) Local 2470 at Camp 9, the preparation plant in the mine complex.

The Camp mines supply coal to the Tennessee Valley Authority Cumberland Steam plant. The complex — built on the site of Camp Breckenridge, a World War II military base — now consists of two underground mines and a preparation plant. Strikers at Camp 1 told us it is rated as one of the most productive underground mines in the country.

"Public sentiment is with us right now," another miner added. In addition to pickets at the mine entrances, Peabody strikers have had an informational picket line in front of the Peabody offices in Henderson, Kentucky. This miner had been on that picket line too. "People in the street are very friendly — they bring us food and coffee. Ninety per cent of the people wave," he said.

## 'I got idea of solidarity at Pittston'

"I got the idea of solidarity at Pittston," Mayberry said. "People were there from Alabama, Ohio, New York — all the AFL-CIO unions. There were some from Canada and I know of one guy from South Africa. I heard there were people there from Poland and even two miners from Russia," he said. "It was quite a sight when we went to Pittston. People were waving. There were signs all over: 'Welcome UMWA.'"

During the Pittston strike, Mayberry joined about 100 other miners from Union County, Kentucky, in a 10-hour car and truck caravan to Camp Solidarity in southwestern Virginia. "We brought tents and slept in them and in the cars and trucks." Camp Solidarity was set up by the striking UMWA miners and their families.

Butch Oldham is the union safety director for this area and is the strike coordinator for Union County. He spent several hours accompanying the *Militant* reporting team to the picket lines and one of the strike offices here. Oldham also talked about the Pittston strike.

"I was outside Moss No. 3 for four days. We sent miners from here every week to



Militant/Stu Singer

Miners in Morganfield, Kentucky, recalled years of struggle against coal bosses.

Virginia to support them. It was a big boost for us and our people seeing what kinds of people supported them," he said.

On Sept. 17, 1989, nearly 100 Pittston strikers occupied the company's Moss No. 3 preparation plant in Carbo, Virginia. Thousands of other miners and strike supporters demonstrated outside.

## Eastern Airlines strike

Oldham mentioned that he attended the UMWA convention in Miami during the Eastern Airlines strike. He was among the miners who left the convention and crowded the Miami airport wearing red strike solidarity T-shirts. "We knew some people hated seeing all of us there with those red shirts and the slash through Lorenzo's name," he said. "But there was nothing they could do about it. And we felt good being able to help out the Eastern strikers a little."

Frank Lorenzo was the chairman of Eastern Airlines. The company folded in 1990 after a 22-month strike by the Machinists' union.

A former miner donated office space to the Camp mine strikers in a building near one of the mine entrances. Our *Militant* reporting team was in the office as miners checked in for a shift change of the pickets. The issue of the *Militant* featuring the strikers from Shawneetown, Illinois, was passed around, read, and discussed.

## Union organizing

One topic UMWA members were eager to talk about was efforts to organize non-union mines. A number of miners we met had been involved in organizing drives. Just the previous week, the UMWA won an election to represent miners at Prestige Coal, a small mine in western Kentucky. But the

union has been unsuccessful at organizing the biggest local target, Pyro.

As the *Militant* reported last week, an explosion in the Pyro underground mine in Wheatcroft, Kentucky, in September 1989 killed 10 miners. The company was recently slapped with a \$3.75 million fine for flagrant safety violations. One foreman was indicted and pleaded guilty to falsifying records of methane levels. Other federal indictments are expected against mine managers.

"Pyro was an explosion waiting to happen," Oldham said. "Everyone in this area knew someone who worked there and we all heard about the company's safety practices."

"The miners had no choice," he added. "Do what you're told or hit the road. Pyro miners would come to the union, and they still do today, asking us to tell federal mine inspectors what's going on in there. We did, and still do pass the information on. But the inspectors failed to do what was necessary before the 1989 explosion."

In a National Labor Relations Board election at the end of 1990, the UMWA lost by about 70 votes out of 930. Oldham was active in that drive. He said there are a number of former UMWA members working there who helped lead the organizing effort.

"The company put a lot of pressure on the workers at Pyro," said Oldham. "The wages are comparable to UMWA mines and the company convinced a majority that their jobs would be threatened if they voted the union in."

"When we do an organizing drive, we try to get a list of where the miners live and visit them at home," he continued. "If they want, we meet with their families too. We tell them, 'Here's who we are. This is what we can do.' We're sort of a militant group ourselves. There's some fear of us because of what the companies say."

Oldham added, "But where we have the union we can work against safety violations like at Pyro."

# Miners win victory against Peabody

## Continued from front page

At issue in this initial battle in the miners' contract was an antiunion practice employed by Peabody and other coal companies called "double breasting."

In violation of the 1988 contract with the UMWA, Peabody and other BCOA companies have opened mines under different names and refused to hire miners laid off from their unionized mines. Through this policy the companies sought to weaken and break the UMWA.

Peabody, with some 7,000 UMWA miners, is the largest coal company in the United States. It is a subsidiary of British holding company Hansen PLC.

At several of its mines Peabody hired private thugs and stationed them provocatively across the road from pickets to harass strikers.

In southern Indiana, Peabody brought strikebreakers into its Lynnville and Squaw Creek mines, running down one UMWA miner as a caravan of vehicles drove nonstop through the picket line.

However, as Peabody geared up to break the UMWA's resolve, the union prepared to widen the fight. Strike training sessions were held at mine workers' union locals throughout the coal fields. "If, after a period of time, the employers refuse to get serious about this situation, then the strike will be expanded," Trumka declared.

One week after the first busloads of strikebreakers forced their way into the Lynnville and Squaw Creek mines, the Peabody strikers were joined by 1,700 of their brothers and sisters.

Although few in number, the reinforcements mobilized by the union shut down mines owned by some of the BCOA's bigger companies including: Consolidated Coal Co., owned by DuPont Co. and Rheinbraun AG of Germany; Arch Mineral Corp., owned by Ashland Oil Inc. and the Hunt family of Texas; Freeman Energy Corp., a subsidiary of General Dynamics; Rochester and Pittsburgh Coal Co.; and Ziegler Coal Holding Co.

As the strike unfolded, the determination of UMWA miners and their supporters to

bring Peabody to terms increased.

Maintaining strict discipline on the picket lines, miners refused to be drawn into provocations by company thugs. Drugs, alcohol, and weapons were prohibited there.

From Marissa, Illinois, to Booneville, Indiana, and Logan, West Virginia, fellow UMWA members and other unionists began to organize a show of solidarity with the striking Peabody miners. They put on fundraisers for the strikers, built picket shacks, and visited the picket lines.

## 'We support the UMWA'

In communities throughout the coal fields where the strike was centered, signs went up on lawns and in store windows: "We support the UMWA," "Union Country," and "UMWA Forever."

Schools, community centers, and other facilities were opened up to the strikers to use as organizing centers for their fight.

Women's and family auxiliaries expanded their memberships and mobilized to staff the kitchens and raise donations of money and food to keep them going.

Camouflage clothing became the strike uniform, proudly donned by strikers, their wives, and their children.

Miners and their supporters mobilized to take their cause to cities, demonstrating in St. Louis; Henderson, Kentucky; and Charleston, West Virginia, outside Peabody headquarters.

Many miners pointed to the victorious 1989 UMWA strike against Pittston as an inspiration for their fight. Hundreds of Peabody miners had visited the union-run Camp Solidarity in Virginia to support that fight and had taken back with them the lessons of that strike.

Faced with this developing mobilization of the mine workers' union and with the very real possibility that it might begin to expand, the coal operators decided to back down from their intransigent stand and open real negotiations with the union for the first time since June of last year.

"The scabs took down their tents and left in two school buses," said Peabody striker David Hadley, who works at the Squaw

Creek mine in Indiana. "Their heads were down and their faces were covered."

"Our heads are held high. We have our pride and dignity. We're meeting at our Camp Solidarity tonight and going back to work together."

## Struggle still lies ahead

As miners return to work under the contract extension, they are keenly aware of the struggle that still lies ahead.

"We're leaving our Camp Solidarity and our picket shacks up," Hadley explained. "We're waiting to see if Sam Shiflett and Peabody follow through on their promises."

Reflecting the thinking of the coal bosses about the 60-day extension of the contract, Rafael Villagran, an analyst with the Shearson Lehman Brothers, told the *Wall Street Journal* that the opening of negotiations is "a far cry away from saying that we're done or the worst is over."

Among the thorny issues that remain to be discussed is the question of UMWA rights in nonunion mines. While Villagran predicts the BCOA may agree to hire UMWA members in nonunion mines using a specific ratio, other coal industry observers say the BCOA will not budge.

Health care is also likely to be a major issue. The BCOA is reportedly looking for concessions from the UMWA in that area, something miners have strongly resisted for two decades.

Meanwhile, less than 30 days remain in the contract extension between the UMWA and the Independent Bituminous Coal Bargaining Alliance (IBCB), scheduled to expire April 2.

The IBCBA, formerly members of the BCOA or signatories to the 1988 BCOA contract, is comprised of several medium-sized companies: Drummond Coal Co. and Jim Walters Resources, both centered in Alabama; Westmoreland Coal Co., with mines in Virginia; and U.S. Steel Mining, a division of USX.

John Hawkins is a laid-off miner in Birmingham, Alabama, and member of UMWA Local 2368.

## Special Offer to Miners and their Supporters

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Available from Pathfinder bookstores listed on page 12 or from Pathfinder, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014. Please include \$3 handling for the first book and \$.50 for each additional copy.



# What is the federal budget deficit?

Labor's priority should be to fight for the needs of all working people

BY MARTIN KOPPEL

The budget deficit.

President Bill Clinton, politicians of both major parties, Ross Perot, and the media are all invoking these two words in speeches and editorials. They want to convince working people that we should be worried about the deficit and, in the name of reducing it, accept "sacrifice" and "pain."

Democratic and Republican politicians alike attempt to sell workers and farmers on the idea that the federal budget is a "shrinking pie." If the government says there isn't enough money, working people are supposed to accept reductions in social programs, living standards, and wages. But this is a myth.

The labor movement must start with the needs of working people, not the profits of the few billionaire families that control the economy.

In his televised address to the nation February 15, Clinton brought out colored charts and graphs to illustrate just how serious a matter the budget deficit was. This was a lead-up to his State of the Union speech to Congress two days later, where the president proposed the biggest austerity program since World War II — nearly \$500 billion in tax increases and social spending cutbacks over four years.

In spite of the president's talk of "shared" sacrifice, workers and farmers will bear the brunt of this attack.

Wealthy investors in government bonds reacted gleefully to Clinton's budget-slashing proposals. The president's speech was a "real big deal for the bond markets," said Brad Tank of Strong/Corneliusson Capital Management. Bond investors "have been optimistic about the Clinton plans for deficit reduction," he added.

Big-business critics of Clinton's plan demanded even steeper cuts in social programs. A number of congressmen have sponsored a proposed amendment to the U.S. Constitution that would require the federal budget to be balanced by 1999, justifying further austerity measures.

## What is the deficit?

What exactly is the federal budget deficit and why do businessmen and capitalist politicians make such a big deal about it?

The government needs money for its expenses, just like any person or company. For example, when the Pentagon places an order for B-2 bombers at a cost of \$2 billion each, there must be enough cash in the U.S. Treasury to cover the check the Pentagon hands over to Northrop Corp., the warplane's manufacturer.

Likewise, the federal government must have funds to pay for every other commodity it purchases, as well as to cover the paychecks of federal employees, Social Security payments, and so on.

Where does the government get the revenue it needs? Mainly from taxes. These include everything from the income tax, which is taken straight out of our paychecks, to Clinton's proposed gasoline tax and other sales taxes paid every time we purchase goods at a store.

If in a given year the government doesn't spend more money than it receives, the bud-

get is said to be balanced. For a long time, before the depression of the 1930s, it was normal for the U.S. budget to be balanced except in wartime. Since World War II, however, federal spending has mushroomed, more and more exceeding revenues. The biggest increase has come in military spending, from \$1.3 billion in 1939 to \$63 billion four years later, and nearly five times that amount today.

In the \$1.4 trillion budget for 1992, by far the largest two expenditures are \$400 billion for Social Security and Medicare, followed by \$300 billion for the military.

Where does the government get the extra money when it spends more than it takes in? It borrows — mostly from wealthy businessmen and banks. These loans to the government are known as bonds or securities, and run between three months and 30 years. Lenders are paid interest on these bonds.

The total amount of money owed by the government — represented by the sum of all outstanding U.S. bonds and securities — is called the national debt, which grows every year the government runs a deficit. In each

Speculators, who buy and sell securities on the bond market just as investors do on the stock market, can make fortunes as the price of government securities rises and falls on the market.

Lenders view the government as a relatively safe investment. Because of its taxing power and control over the issue of currency, it is almost ruled out at this point that the U.S. government would officially default on its debts. As a result, lenders to the U.S. government are willing to settle for a lower rate of interest than what banks charge corporations, not to mention working people.

Loans to the government are not free of risk, however. While the risk of a formal default is very low, there is a growing chance that the debt will be repaid in devalued currency.

## Worried about instability

Capitalists are concerned that the relentless growth of the federal deficit strains an economy that today is very unstable. The deficit grew explosively during and after the

The solution of the wealthy ruling families of the United States is to make workers and farmers "sacrifice" their wages and living standards in order to bail out the capitalist economic system. While rich bondholders will continue to get their interest payments, the Clinton administration plans to wield the budget ax against social benefits that working people have won over previous decades. Of the proposed \$247 billion in spending cuts, the biggest chunk — \$91 billion — would come out of entitlements like Social Security.

## Don't accept 'budget' framework

The propaganda campaign by Democratic and Republican politicians around the federal deficit seeks to lure working people into a trap — to accept their argument that there is a limited "budget" and that if the government claims there isn't enough money, we must accept cutbacks in our living standards.

The starting point for the labor movement must be completely different — the inter-



Militant/Eric Simpson

Union contingent at 1981 Solidarity Day march in Washington, D.C. Budget deficit is employers' problem, not workers'. Labor must fight to unite working people in a struggle for jobs for all, affirmative action, and international working-class solidarity, as well as to defend and extend entitlements like Social Security.

of the last several years the federal deficit has been running above \$200 billion and the overall national debt is now close to \$4 trillion — the world's highest (a trillion is a million millions).

To pay a bond that comes due, the government simply issues a new one. The government thus perpetually "rolls over" the national debt, which steadily increases.

## Bondholders rake it in

This national debt represents a huge source of profits for many capitalists. In fact, the third-largest expense in the U.S. budget after Social Security and military spending is interest payments to bondholders — some \$200 billion a year. This means the federal government now pays more to bondholders in interest than it spends on education, science, transportation, housing, food stamps, and welfare combined. Interest payments have multiplied 10-fold since 1970.

Vietnam War. In the 1980s, the Reagan administration carried out a huge military buildup and gave hefty tax cuts to the rich. While the government began to cut deeply into social programs, this was not enough to offset the rising deficit.

Meanwhile, government officials predict that 100 to 125 banks with \$75 billion in assets will go broke this year, exceeding last year's number of bank failures. This has focused attention on the weak condition of the U.S. banking system and increased the nervousness in business circles about the long-term soundness of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp., the government agency that will have to pay tens of billions of dollars for these bank failures.

A *New York Times* article last year noted that the federal government's debt now equals more than half the country's gross domestic product — the total output of goods and services on U.S. territory. "By absorbing a huge share of the nation's savings, the Federal deficit has helped cripple the investment in new plants and machinery vital to economic growth," it said. This weakens the ability of U.S. capitalists to compete with their rivals in Germany, Britain, Japan, and elsewhere.

A February 11 column in the *Wall Street Journal* by James Davidson pointed to some of these mounting problems and stated what more and more capitalist economists now admit: while the United States has emerged from the 1990-91 downturn in the business cycle, it has entered "a major world depression which is still to reach its deepest stage."

Davidson comments that the "difference between the depression of the 1990s and that of the 1930s is that the first phase of the current depression has been dragged out. Governments are playing a much larger role in economies today. By borrowing against the future, politicians have so far been able to prevent the collapse in income and the debt liquidation associated with the second and deeper stage of the Great Depression." He adds, "the worst is yet to come."

ests of workers and farmers, not the employers, must come first. This is the basis for an effective fight by the labor movement to defend all entitlements, particularly the universal right to Social Security and Medicare, regardless of income.

To fight for jobs for all, not just for some, labor must campaign to reduce the workweek to 30 hours with no reduction in pay. This demand, accompanied by a fight to raise the minimum wage and to expand affirmative action programs for workers who are Black and female, can unite working people in defense of our common class interests. To bring together the potential strength of the working class across national borders, the labor movement should join the international fight to cancel the Third World debt, which is strangling working people around the globe.

The budget deficit is the employers' problem, not ours. From the standpoint of working people — who produce all the wealth — there is enough money to meet the needs of society. But it will take a fight, involving millions, to push back the attacks by the employers and the government and get the necessary relief from the effects of the depression.

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## Northwest demands new wages cuts

Continued from back page

In 1989 many Northwest employees regarded the company's new owner, Alfred Checchi, as a white knight who would protect jobs and the airline from corporate raiders. This sentiment has changed dramatically. In February the *Minneapolis Star Tribune*, a major daily newspaper, revealed that Checchi and partner Gary Wilson had speculated in Northwest stock and then used the proceeds to help them buy the airline. The paper also stated that Checchi and Wilson had taken over \$100 million from the airline over the past three years through management fees, bonuses, and stock options.

Checchi also hired dozens of former Eastern Airlines managers including Joe Leonard, one of the enforcers of Frank Lorenzo's union-busting attacks just prior to the 22-month-long strike at that company.

During the last few months Northwest substantially increased the number of disci-

plinary letters handed out to employees. It also reduced the size of ramp crews at its Minneapolis hub, in spite of the fact they were already shorthanded.

KLM Royal Dutch Airlines and Northwest recently merged operations, including fares, scheduling, and revenue. Some workers hoped that the increased role of KLM in management would mean a more sympathetic attitude toward the work force. This idea was partly dispelled when union members learned that KLM had threatened its own workers in the United States it would contract out baggage handling and other work if they did not agree to a 10 percent wage cut. A ticket agent declared, "I don't think KLM likes workers any more than Northwest does."

Kip Hedges is a member of International Association of Machinists Local 1833 in Minneapolis.



# Negotiations move forward in drive to end apartheid regime's rule in South Africa

Continued from front page

Inkatha is the ruling party in the KwaZulu homelands, which is surrounded by Natal province in the southeastern part of the country. All the Cosag organizations oppose the ANC's course toward a unitary, non-racial, democratic South Africa.

At the closing plenary session, Inkatha leader Frank Mdlalose urged the Conservatives to agree to the resolution in the spirit of keeping the negotiations going. Although the Conservative delegation did not do so, it agreed to remain on the Facilitating Committee arranging the next round of talks.

"The presence of the Conservative Party at the planning conference, we believe, says quite enough regarding our participation in the negotiation process," said party leader Thomas Langley at a press conference following adjournment. "Our participation in the Facilitating Committee... indicates that we are keeping our options open whilst continuing to state our case."

At the ANC's press conference, Ramaphosa pointed out that the Conservatives had always said they would never sit down in talks with the ANC or the South African Communist Party. "Now they have done so," he said. "So, that is progress."

The head of the South African government delegation, Roelof Meyer, said he was "very happy" at the outcome of the conference, as did Dawie de Villiers, who led the National Party delegation.

During the proceedings, National Party spokespeople sought to take credit for the resumption of talks, implicitly blaming the ANC for the breakdown of the Codesa negotiations in May 1992.

"Codesa was derailed," said de Villiers at the opening plenary. "People felt that the differences should rather be settled in the streets than around the negotiating table."

Actually, the National Party, in collusion with Inkatha, was responsible for the failure of Codesa II. The police and armed forces, together with Inkatha thugs, intensified violent assaults against ANC supporters and others that took 1,800 lives during the first half of 1992. Meanwhile, the National Party was stubbornly insisting that the white minority regime have veto power both in drafting a new constitution and in the government emerging from new elections.

The ANC, together with other forces in the democratic movement such as the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), responded with strikes and mass demonstrations that forced the government to resume bilateral talks with the ANC in September, leading to the revival of multi-lateral discussions this week.

At the planning conference, a major focus of disputes was over the place of Codesa agreements in the talks that lie ahead.

At the December 1991 gathering, 17 of 19 participants, including the government,

agreed "to be bound by the agreements of Codesa." The Declaration of Intent signed there stated the aim of bringing about "an undivided South Africa with one nation sharing a common citizenship, patriotism and loyalty, pursuing amidst our diversity, freedom, equality, and security for all irrespective of race, colour, sex or creed: a country free from apartheid or any other form of discrimination or domination."

Signers agreed "that South Africa will be a united, democratic, nonracial and non-sexist state in which sovereign authority is exercised over the whole country," and "that the diversity of languages, cultures and religions of the people of South Africa shall be acknowledged."

Inkatha and the Bophuthatswana government refused to sign, objecting in particular to the declaration's call for "an undivided South Africa." The officials and leading cadres of both Inkatha and the Bophuthatswana regime derive their income and power from the apartheid regime's fragmentation of South Africa into fake "homelands" (bantustans), based on bogus, ahistorical concepts of peoples and nationalities drawn up in white supremacist bureaus in Pretoria.

In addition to these two groups that were not party to the Codesa I agreement, seven more were at the March 5-6 gathering that had not participated in earlier talks. So the resolution adopted here agreed that the first meeting of the upcoming negotiations

would place on its agenda "how to accommodate the views of those participants who were not in Codesa," and "how these agreements can serve as a constructive foundation for the resumed negotiations process to build on." The conference also agreed that "how this forum shall be structured and named" will be left for future decision.

## Where to start

In his remarks to the March 6 press conference, ANC leader Ramaphosa stressed that "the achievements of past negotiations should serve as a constructive foundation for the resumed negotiations we are embarking upon now. In this regard we reaffirm our commitment to the scenario hammered out at Codesa."

The fact that the "diverse and conflicting formations in Codesa" reached broad areas of agreement, Ramaphosa said in his remarks to the opening plenary March 5, "is an achievement that cannot be written off as if it never happened." The core of that agreement, he said, "was the recognition that the surest way to a legitimate and credible democratic constitution is to have it drafted and adopted by the elected representatives of the people in the form of a constituent assembly."

The draft resolution amended and adopted by the conference — introduced by Gen. Bantubonke Holomisa, head of the Transkei government — initially contained a call for the new constitution to be drawn up "by democratically elected representatives of all the people."

Government representative Roelof Meyer suggested that this wording be dropped; Holomisa agreed. Gora Ebrahim of the Pan Africanist Congress then took the floor to state his regret that Holomisa had accepted this amendment.

Ramaphosa replied that while the ANC, "as is well known," supports an elected constituent assembly, the amended resolution recognized that the aim of this gathering was "to get the multiparty talks going again" — that's where the elections should be debated and decided.

## Constituent assembly

While the PAC and other delegations ended up concurring with this procedure, debate over how a new constitution would be drafted ran throughout the conference.

Ramaphosa was asked at the press conference whether the ANC left any room for compromise on organizing elections. While the ANC's negotiating committee has been given great flexibility in its work, he replied, the sovereignty of an elected constituent assembly is "a matter of principle which they have no authority to depart from."

In his opening remarks to the planning conference, Ramaphosa said that "neither the present government nor any single formation, party, or organization could preside

## ANC launches solidarity campaign with Angola



Militant/Sam Manuel  
ANC deputy president Walter Sisulu (center) at March 1 picket against civil war in Angola. The rally in Johannesburg kicked off ANC's Angola Solidarity Campaign.

BY SAM MANUEL

JOHANNESBURG, South Africa— "Phansi Savimbi!" (Down with Savimbi) "Phezulu MPLA!" (Up with MPLA) chanted some 200 participants in a lunchtime picket at the U.S. consulate here. The March 1 picket was called by the African National Congress (ANC) to protest the war being waged by the counterrevolutionary National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) against the recently elected Angolan government.

An estimated 15,000 Angolans, mostly civilians, have died in the latest fighting. The rightist outfit relaunched military actions when its leader, Jonas Savimbi, lost to the ruling Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) in internationally supervised elections last fall.

"We call upon [U.S.] President Bill Clinton and the government of the United States to recognize the MPLA as the legitimate government elected by the people of Angola in free and fair elections," declared ANC deputy president Walter Sisulu.

"We are here today to show our solidarity with the people of Angola, who have stood by us all these many years," he added.

Pedestrian traffic came to a near halt

outside the consulate as many shoppers joined the protest. Participants in the picket carried signs that read, "Hands Off Angola!", "Viva MPLA!", and "Savimbi Is a Pig!"

Most passersby, Black and white, looked on with interest or went about their business. A few whites, angered by the picket, aggressively elbowed their way through the protesters, but the participants were disciplined and ignored the provocation.

The crowd broke into a spirited *toi toi*, a popular South African protest dance, as it proceeded to the U.S. consulate. They sang—in Zulu—"We don't want de Klerk. We want Mandela," and "We don't want Savimbi. We want MPLA."

At the consulate Sisulu delivered a joint statement on behalf of the ANC, the Congress of South African Trade Unions, and the South African Communist Party. The statement condemned UNITA's military actions as a "clear attempt to achieve by force what it was denied by the ballot box." It urged Clinton to "establish formal diplomatic relations with the elected government of Angola" and "to ensure that all foreign support for UNITA is immediately brought to an end, especially from South Africa and Zaire."

The Angolan government February 22 accused South African marines of conducting exercises in Cape Town to prepare for attacks in support of UNITA on economic targets in Angola.

U.S. assistant consul general Karl Danga issued a policy statement that read, in part, "The United States is firmly opposed to any kind of external military or paramilitary assistance to the warring parties in Angola."

The protest received wide press coverage the next day. Two major Johannesburg dailies—the *Star* and *Business Day*—ran editorials urging the National Party government to reveal what it knows about the arming and feeding of UNITA's current operations and calling on Pretoria and Washington to recognize the MPLA government.

A press release issued by the ANC February 27 explained that the March 1 picket was the first of a number of similar actions called "to launch the Angola Solidarity Campaign—and establish regional Angola Solidarity Committees—in Cape Town, Durban, Witbank, Port Elizabeth and Bloemfontein."

The statement added that the South African military would be a focus of the campaign, because of its support for UNITA.

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over the process leading to the elections for the constituent assembly.

"Accordingly, the scenario we evolved envisaged the formation of a multiparty transitional executive committee during the first stage, which would ensure that the playing fields are leveled and that there is a climate of free political activity throughout our country."

Roelof Meyer, head of the government delegation, said at the opening plenary that the negotiations process must seek "to ensure that elections for a government of national unity can take place in a year's time." Both he and the National Party spokesperson, however, avoided any mention of an elected constituent assembly.

In bilateral talks, the ANC and the government are still at loggerheads over the powers of a multiparty Transitional Executive Committee (TEC) to preside over elections.

The ANC insists that the TEC establish a joint command structure over the armed forces and cops of the government and homeland administrations, as well as other armed bodies such as Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK), the ANC's armed wing, and the PAC-affiliated Azanian People's Liberation Army (APLA). Given what is known about the involvement of state security forces — both Pretoria's and those of various bantustan administrations — in using terror and intimidation to block political activity in South Africa, the ANC says that free and fair elections necessitate centralized control over these bodies.

The government, on the other hand, insists that it alone retain command over the cops and armed forces during the elections and that MK and APLA turn over their arms and membership lists and disband. The PAC refused to call off armed APLA actions in talks with the National Party government in Botswana earlier in the week. The regime nonetheless did not try to bar the PAC from the multiparty talks.

President F. W. de Klerk also continues to reject the ANC's demand that the state-owned SABC radio and television network be subject to an independent board appointed by the Transitional Executive Committee. This is necessary if there is to be even a semblance of impartial media coverage during the elections, the ANC says.

Aside from the ANC, a number of other delegations at the conference called for a constitution drafted by a democratically elected body. These include the South African Communist Party; the Natal and Trans-

vaal Indian National Congress; the Labour Party, a party based largely among the Coloured population in Cape Province; and parties and administrations from several of the homelands, including the Transkei and Venda governments, the Intando Yesizwe Party in KwaNdebele, the Inyandza National Movement in Ka Ngwane, and the United People's Front in Lebowa.

Ken Andrew, leader of the delegation from the liberal Democratic Party, said at the opening plenary that the new constitution "must be negotiated by an elected constitution-making body." But he added that "any new constitution must be referred back to all the people of South Africa for endorsement by way of a referendum."

Benny Alexander, general-secretary of the Pan Africanist Congress, called for "the establishment of a sovereign constituent assembly, elected on the basis of one person, one vote, with all Azanians over the age of 18 voting on a common voters' roll in a unitary state."

This reporter subsequently asked PAC delegate Gora Ebrahim the significance of the wording "all Azanians." "We call this country Azania," Ebrahim replied, "so all who live here are Azanians."

"But we also need to clarify the question: What is a settler?" Ebrahim added. "What do you call someone who comes here from Europe and denies all indigenous peoples their rights? What do you call them if not a settler? But if they accept the rights of the indigenous peoples, then they are Azanians."

Ebrahim offered no explanation of what mechanism the PAC proposes to distinguish Azanians from settlers on the voters' roll.

#### Drawn up by 'wise men'

Other delegations at the planning conference minced no words in opposing elections for a constituent assembly.

At the Inkatha Freedom Party press conference, delegation member Walter Felgate said that "Codesa is dead!" As for elections to a constituent assembly to draft a new constitution, Felgate called the procedure "too cumbersome."

Instead, Felgate proposed that "some experts and wise men should go off to a secluded area and draw up the constitution." The draft could then be discussed by a multiparty conference — where each delegation would have an equal vote, regardless of its degree of support — and then submitted to a referendum.

Inkatha also reaffirmed its call for a weak central government, retaining most powers in the apartheid-created homelands and provinces. In particular, Inkatha hopes to extend its power and privileges from the KwaZulu bantustan to a united government with surrounding Natal province, in collaboration with reactionary white ruling-class interests in that region.

#### 'Afrikaner self-determination'

This separatist or so-called federal perspective and commitment to capitalist interests and values are Inkatha's point of convergence with right-wing, proapartheid groups such as the Conservative Party.

In his presentation to the plenary, Conservative leader Thomas Langley affirmed the right of self-determination of "our constituency," which he defined as "Afrikanerdom and those of Anglo and European stock who are one with the Afrikaner." When subsequently asked at the press conference when the Conservative Party would open its doors to nonwhites, Langley answered, "That's not on our agenda yet, and I don't know if it will ever be on our agenda." The ruling National Party formally dropped its color bar in 1990.

The Conservative Party, said Langley, rejects "any plan to force our people into a unitary state under a single central government." The form of a new government should be decided not by an elected constituent assembly, he said, but by the current apartheid parliament. Langley concluded with a thinly disguised declaration of war should a unitary, nonracial republic come to pass.

Recalling the 1899-1902 Boer War



Militant/Sam Manuel

ANC leader Cyril Ramaphosa at the March 5-6 Multiparty Planning Conference in Johannesburg. The meeting was an "unqualified success," he said.

against Britain, in which thousands of Afrikaner farmers and their families were killed, Langley said: "This was the price we were willing to pay for our freedom. Anyone who thinks that he can dominate and govern the Afrikaner nation must bear this in mind...."

"Don't expect us to cooperate toward our own destruction. Don't expect us to negotiate ourselves into a position where we have no control over the destiny of our people.... Believe us: we are serious! We as a nation have no ship in the harbor! Here we shall live, and here shall survive."

Despite Langley's blustering remarks, a more telling gauge of the confidence and morale of the white supremacist bunker (*laager* in Afrikaans) is the fact that the Conservative Party for the first time sat down around a negotiating table with the African National Congress.

#### Violence: made in Pretoria

The National Party regime's strongest card against the democratic movement in South Africa is its combination of divide-and-rule tactics within the Black majority with both open and covert government violence against the oppressed and their vanguard political organizations and cadres.

In the Natal/KwaZulu region, where Inkatha has its base, whole communities have been burned out and subjected to murderous terror because some residents were known or suspected to have ANC sympathies. In some cases these assaults have elicited violent responses, despite calls by the ANC leadership to renounce retaliation. State security forces and armed racist gangs stir the pot, carrying out their own butchery under the propaganda cover of "Black-on-Black" violence.

This obstacle to a democratic South Africa was very much in the news as delegates met at the planning conference. In the week just prior to this gathering, six schoolchildren were murdered in cold blood in the Table Mountain area of Natal, near Pietermaritzburg. A few days later, on March 3, 10 people were shot to death in a minibus only several miles away. Several of the slain

students were children of a local Inkatha leader.

The ANC immediately condemned the brutal assault on the schoolchildren and demanded that "its perpetrators be apprehended and prosecuted to the full extent of the law." The ANC statement pointed to "a clear pattern of increased violence and atrocities before important events in negotiations and the peace process. This most recent massacre is a deliberate attempt to provoke renewed conflict and destabilize the scheduled multiparty planning conference."

The Inkatha Freedom Party and KwaZulu government responded to the killings with a joint statement calling on the South African government "to insist on the immediate disbandment of the ANC's military wing, Umkhonto We Sizwe, and the surrender of the arms caches." The statement said, "It is obvious that there is a campaign to smash the IFP and the KwaZulu government."

In his remarks to the opening session of the multiparty conference March 5, Ramaphosa called on the entire body to stand for a moment of silence. With news of the second Table Mountain slaughter in the headlines the next day, Ramaphosa proposed that a resolution submitted by Inkatha leader Frank Mdlalose — which did not contain insinuations of ANC culpability — be adopted instead of one by the conference resolutions committee.

Following the second bloody attack, the ANC sent a top National Executive Committee delegation to Natal "to hold discussions with the regional leadership," according to a statement released March 6. The delegation consisted of Joe Modise, Sydney Mafumadi, Patrick Lekota, Gertrude Shope, and Rapu Molekane.

In addition, ANC president Nelson Mandela has scheduled a visit to the area the week following the planning conference. Ramaphosa announced that plans are still under way for a meeting between Mandela and Inkatha leader Mangosuthu Buthelezi to discuss what can be done to bring a halt to the violence.

Continued on Page 12

## Funds needed for Cuba, South Africa reporting trips

Over the past several weeks the *Militant* has fielded an extensive reporting team to South Africa. Through the efforts of several on-the-scene journalists our readers are getting unique and invaluable coverage of the struggle for the first free elections in South Africa's history. The *Militant* articles are also getting a wider audience. The February 27 issue of the New York weekly *Amsterdam News* reprinted the *Militant* article by John Steele and Brian Taylor entitled "ANC paves way for first 'free and fair' elections."

*Militant* staff writer Sara Lobman and *New Internationalist* editor Mary-Alice Waters are now in Cuba to report on important meetings and conferences taking place there. On-the-scene reports from that team begin in this week's issue.

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# Affirmative action, challenged by rail union officialdom, is debated by workers

BY HARVEY McARTHUR

SEATTLE—“First selection to Locomotive Engineer Training Program (LETP) is now based solely on seniority.”

This terse notice was posted by United Transportation Union (UTU) officials at a Burlington Northern railroad yard office here in January. It marked a successful challenge mounted by union officials to an affirmative action program the company was forced to institute a few years ago.

Under terms of the UTU contract, candidates for engineer training are selected by the company from among the conductors, brakemen, and switchpersons already working at the Burlington Northern (BN). Because of discriminatory policies by the railroad bosses few Blacks or women ever got engineer jobs before the 1980s.

In the mid-1980s groups of Black and women workers filed suit against the BN for discrimination. The suits were settled when the company agreed to guarantee a few positions for Blacks and women in each new class

through 1991, even if they were not the candidates with the most seniority. In practice, the BN used this hiring quota here through the end of 1992. A wide-ranging debate about the program started when the BN opened bids for an engineer class last fall.

“This is just discrimination against whites,” said one brakeman in a discussion in an Everett, Washington, yard office. “There’s no race discrimination anymore. Women and Blacks just get special rights.”

Another, arguing against the engineer training quotas in a discussion in Wenatchee, Washington, said, “It’s OK to have quotas for hiring off the street, but then it should go by strict seniority for promotion to engineer.”

## Affirmative action is needed

Others spoke up for the affirmative action program.

“For many years the only job you could get if you were a person of color was on the track gang,” explained Seattle switchperson



Militant/Della Rossa

**Affirmative action programs won by Black and women workers in mid-1980s have made progress in reversing inequalities on many railroads.**

Craig McKissock. “Affirmative action is needed to make up for the railroad’s years of discrimination.”

“Blacks and women are still not represented fairly in the seniority lists,” said Ed Conley. He trained to be an engineer in 1990 when the affirmative action program was still in effect. “There were only two Blacks and one woman in my class of 20,” he said. “Without the quota there would be almost none working as engineers.”

“What about other minorities who are

discriminated against?” asked Tanya Hilliard, a conductor working freight trains between Seattle and Portland, Oregon. “Do you know any Native American or Asian engineers? They should expand the program, not end it.”

The BN selected 19 applicants for the last engineer class, using the old affirmative action criteria. Sixteen white workers were chosen in strict seniority order, all with hire dates between 1978 and 1989. One of those was a woman. Three newer workers, all women and one a Black, were also included.

“Women, Blacks, Native Americans, and other national minorities are still discriminated against by the employers and suffer from a much higher unemployment,” explained Kathy Wheeler, a switchperson in Seattle. “That’s why we should champion affirmative action to fight this inequality and forge unity among all workers.”

UTU officials, however, demanded the company end the program.

“It is the position of the UTU that all selections for LETP must now be made solely on the basis of train service seniority,” wrote regional UTU official R.L. Marceau to local union officers.

Marceau offered to file claims against the BN on behalf of any workers “who have been discriminated against if a Black or woman worker with less seniority was accepted into LETP ahead of them.”

Harvey McArthur is a switchperson on the Burlington Northern in Seattle and a member of United Transportation Union Local 845.

## Photo exhibition depicts long history of women working on U.S. railroads

BY JANE ROLAND

GREENSBORO, North Carolina—An unusual photograph exhibit was on display at the North Carolina Transportation Museum earlier this year. Called “Women and the American Railroad,” it documented 135 years of women working on the railroad. The exhibit filled in missing chunks of both the history of women and of the working class in the United States.

Some of the most interesting photos were taken during the first and second world wars, when the railroads were forced to hire women by the thousands to take the place of men sent to the front. Two pictures taken on the Union Pacific Railroad in 1918 show the same crew. In one shot the women posing in their dirty overalls and work boots; in the other they are unloading heavy pipe from a boxcar.

A 1943 photo shows several women in jeans, their hair wrapped in scarves, cleaning a steam engine. The caution sign propped in front reads, “Men at work.”

The curator of the exhibit, Shirley Burman, explained that during World War I more than 100,000 women were laborers, mechanics, electricians, switch tenders, and freight handlers on the railroads, but never engineers or conductors.

Again during World War II 100,000 women filled vital nonclerical jobs. Women worked as track sweepers, cleaners, sheet metal workers, drill press operators, painters, signalpersons, truckers, but, again, not engineers.

After each war ended, the government and employers began their campaign to get women out of these jobs. The Federal Railroad Administration, which in 1914 mandated “equal pay for equal work” for women in rail jobs, four years later put out a director’s circular that women were not to be used “as section laborers and truckers in freight depots and warehouses. It is felt that this class of work is not at all proper for women and that in view of the wages now being paid for such work it should be possible to secure men.”

As with other basic industries that employed women during the imperialist wars, the campaign was not to push women off the railroad but out of the higher-paying, traditionally male jobs and back to clerical and cleaning work.

The women who took the nontraditional jobs learned a lot more than just the actual skills involved. Taking on new responsibilities brought irreversible changes in the way both women and men looked at women’s place in society.

This remains true today when women fight their way into railroad jobs, or jobs in the mines, steel mills, or other traditionally male work. It changes the way women think about themselves and the way men think about women. Stereotyped images about the “weaker” or “second” sex fade when women and men are performing the same work.

In 1971, under the impact of a growing movement for women’s rights, a federal court issued a ruling against sex discrimination on the job. The case was brought by Leah Rosenfeld, a worker with 30 years seniority, against Southern Pacific Railroad.

The court cited the Civil Rights Act of 1964 in overturning the company’s use of so-called protective laws to refuse promotions to women. This ruling opened the way for women to enter rail jobs in the early

1970s, particularly in the West and Midwest.

The “Women and the American Railroad” exhibit spurred discussions on the job and took up questions many male workers often raise about the ability of women to do the job. It points to the necessity of our unions taking up the fight for equality.

A photo from an International Women’s Day demonstration sums up this point. A group of railroad workers, male and female, who are members of the United Transportation Union hold banners proclaiming “UTU Local 31 on track for women’s rights.”

Jane Roland is a member of United Transportation Union Local 783 in Salisbury, North Carolina, and is an engineer for Norfolk Southern Railroad.

## Socialist rail workers discuss bosses’ attacks

BY PAT HUNT

NEWARK, New Jersey—About 40 rail workers who are members of the Socialist Workers Party gathered here recently to discuss the challenges ahead for workers and youth. Meeting only days into the new Clinton administration, the socialist rail workers took stock of the increased threats of U.S.-led war around the world and the government campaign to slash Social Security as they discussed the continuing attacks of the rail bosses against the unions.

A political report given by Joe Swanson, a member of the United Transportation Union (UTU) from San Francisco, pointed out that signs that the economy is improving have not meant an uplift for workers. Official figures of unemployment stand at 9 million.

As this recovery in a depression continues, the rail carriers are driving through their concession demands based on the last crew-consist agreement with the rail unions. As of January 1, over-the-road rail workers took a pay cut as a result of the increase in miles that must be travelled to make a basic day’s pay. And more crews are working without a helper; with just a conductor and engineer.

Swanson also noted clerks are under a new wage scale, with many taking sizable cuts, and more clerks’ jobs are being eliminated.

The continued reduction of crew sizes on the railroad has created more hazardous and harder working conditions. In the last year, there has been a 9 percent drop in train and

engine employees on the major carriers. These companies, meanwhile, report record profits. According to a January 28 article in the *Philadelphia Inquirer* Conrail had the highest fourth-quarter net income in its history by trimming its expenses.

An important discussion on affirmative action took place at the meeting, which noted the bosses’ efforts to gut these programs. In some cases union officials have joined in the effort to cut back the gains made to advance women, Blacks, and other minorities.

“One of the challenges for industrial workers, including rail workers, is to look beyond their own union,” explained Swanson. “Some union officials have put out statements that affirmative action quotas are not needed today, that the railroad employers have ‘met all their legal obligations.’ But the fight for affirmative action quotas for oppressed nationalities and women is in the direct interest of the working class as a whole. It is a way for workers to fight for unity.”

“Affirmative action makes us stronger against the bosses. And since UTU officials have often demonstrated their willingness to collaborate with the bosses in the rail carriers drive for more profits it is not surprising they would back the companies on this.”

Another important aspect of the meeting was the discussion on stepping up defense of Mark Curtis, a trade union and political activist who was framed up on rape and burglary charges in March 1988. Curtis has

served four and a half years in Iowa prisons.

The rail workers mapped out plans to organize support activities for Curtis in every area on a monthly basis. A priority was placed on getting letters of support for his freedom from coworkers, union officials, and prominent individuals.

Margrethe Siem, a member of the UTU from Washington, D.C., also reported that her coworkers showed enthusiasm for fighting apartheid in South Africa. Her local endorsed an upcoming tour of South African youths and donated \$100 toward tour costs.

Following on the heels of a successful sales campaign last fall, the socialist rail workers decided to take on a goal of selling 52 copies of the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* every week, 28 copies of *New Internationalist*, and signing up 19 new members of the Pathfinder Readers Club.

The socialists also recalled the big role they were able to play in the capital expansion fund, which made it possible to add 4,000 square feet of modern factory space to the printshop that produces revolutionary books and pamphlets published by Pathfinder Press.

Over the past year several rail workers were able to turn parts of bad contracts into an advantage by donating buyouts, bonuses, and COLA checks to the capital expansion fund. In all more than \$300,000 was raised toward the Pathfinder reconstruction project.

Pat Hunt is a member of United Transportation Union Local 1405 from St. Louis.



# A book for women's rights fighters

**Problems of Women's Liberation**, by Evelyn Reed, New York, Pathfinder, new edition 1993, 136 pp., \$12.95.

BY PAT SMITH

*Problems of Women's Liberation* by Evelyn Reed is a valuable book for young women and men who are participating in the fights to defend abortion clinics and other battles for women's rights today.

In this book they will find answers to many important questions, such as how women played a pivotal role in forging hu-

manity and how women's central role in early societies was brought to an end. They will also learn how the exploiting classes throughout history have maintained and benefited from the oppression of women, and what social forces have the interest, and capacity, to end women's oppression.

Evelyn Reed, who died in 1979, was a Marxist and a fighter for the working class. A leading member of the Socialist Workers Party for several decades and an active participant in the women's liberation movement of the 1960s and '70s, Reed spent many years studying and writing about the origins of human society and the role of women. Drawing on the writings of the founders of the communist movement, Karl

Marx and Frederick Engels, Reed's materialist view of history enabled her to make a real contribution to a scientific understanding of humanity's passage from pre-class to class society.

Reed explains that the oppression of women began with the appearance of private property several thousand years ago, which was accompanied by the rise of the first ruling class in history. Prior to the division of society into exploiting and exploited classes, women were not oppressed. In fact, they played the central role in nurturing and raising children, organizing and making advances in agriculture, and governing society overall.

In the article "The myth of women's inferiority," Reed explains that early society existed without social inequalities or discrimination of any kind. Women's capacity to bear children, far from being a handicap, was an advantage because it was the female of the species that had the care and responsibility of feeding, tending, and protecting the young.

"All societies both past and present are founded upon labor," Reed explains. "Thus, it was not simply the capacity of women to give birth that played the decisive role, for all female animals also give birth. What was decisive for the human species was the fact that maternity led to labor — and it was in the fusion of maternity and labor that the first human social system was founded.

"It was the mothers who first took the

road of labor, and by the same token blazed the trail toward humanity. It was the mothers who became the chief producers; the workers and farmers; the leaders in scientific, intellectual, and cultural life."

In "Women: caste, class or oppressed sex?" Reed summarizes the factors that led to the downfall of women and the beginnings of class-divided society. She points to the way society made a transition from one that procured its food by hunting and gathering, without any significant surplus, to one in which production was based upon agriculture, stock raising, and urban crafts. The increase in the productivity of labor under these new methods gave rise to a sizable surplus product. This led to a more developed and complex division of labor and the first social differentiations, which over time led to deep-going divisions among different sections of society. For the first time in history a ruling class of exploiters, and an exploited class, made their appearance.

## Origin of women's oppression

Why did this lead to the displacement of women from their previous central place in society?

"By virtue of the directing roles played by men in large-scale agriculture, irrigation and construction projects, as well as in stock raising," says Reed, "this surplus wealth was gradually appropriated by a hierarchy of men as their private property." She explains that to protect and legalize the rulers' right to this newfound wealth, a state apparatus came into existence along with a new institution, the father-family, to guarantee the passing of property from father to son.

The origin and evolution of the family throughout class society, and its role in maintaining women's second-class status, is taken up in some detail by Reed. She explains how the capitalists today use the institution of the family to try to force working people to carry the overwhelming burden of providing and paying for the care and wel-

fare of each member of their family — from medical expenses and child care to full-time care of the sick and elderly.

Reed polemicizes with feminist authors who claim that women, as a sex, form a separate "class" or "caste" and are oppressed by all men. The patriarchal class system that brought the subjugation of women, she says, also led to the exploitation of the mass of toiling men by the new ruling class.

"The notion that all women as a sex have more in common than do members of the same class with one another is false. Upper-class women are not simply bedmates of their wealthy husbands. As a rule they have more compelling ties which bind them together. They are economic, social, and political bedmates, united in defense of private property, profiteering, militarism, racism — and the exploitation of other women." She could have been writing about a number of recent contenders for the post of U.S. attorney general.

The real allies of exploited working women, Reed says, are working men. Reed firmly believed that only the working class has the capacity and interest to replace the rapacious ruling class and open the door to move all humanity forward.

Together with Reed's book *Sexism and Science* and another she co-authored — *Cosmetics, Fashions, and the Exploitation of Women* — Pathfinder has reissued *Problems of Women's Liberation* with a short preface by Mary-Alice Waters and an attractive new cover designed by Toni Gorton. These books are being offered at a special 25 percent discount to members of the Pathfinder Readers Club during Women's History Month in March.

Getting these books out as widely as possible will help arm a new generation of fighting young women and men with a scientific and revolutionary anti-capitalist outlook on the fight for women's rights and the liberation of all working people.

## Available from Pathfinder

### PROBLEMS OF WOMEN'S LIBERATION

by Evelyn Reed

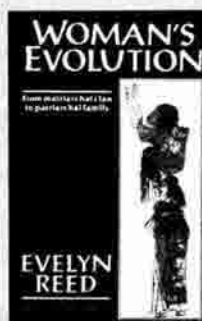
Explores the social and economic roots of women's oppression from prehistoric society to modern capitalism and points the road forward to emancipation. \$12.95



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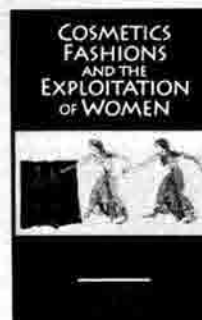
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### Cosmetics, Fashions, and the Exploitation of Women

by Joseph Hansen, Evelyn Reed, and Mary-Alice Waters

How big business uses women's second-class status to generate profits for a few and perpetuate the oppression of the female sex and the exploitation of working people. \$12.95

Available from bookstores listed on page 12 or from Pathfinder, 410 West Street, New York, NY 10014. To cover postage and handling, add \$3.00 for the first book, \$0.50 for each additional title.



## PATHFINDER AROUND THE WORLD

BY DUANE STILWELL

Pathfinder, located in New York with distributors in Australia, Britain, and Canada, publishes the works of working-class and communist leaders of the worldwide struggles against exploitation and oppression. Pathfinder bookstores are listed in the directory on page 12.

*El Diario/La Prensa*, a Spanish-language daily newspaper in the New York-New Jersey area, has featured the new Pathfinder title *Habla Malcolm X* (Malcolm X Speaks) in a column of bestsellers it publishes every Tuesday.

The column is compiled by Lectorum, one of the larger bookstores and wholesalers of Spanish-language books in the United States.

The book, the most extensive collection of speeches, interviews, and statements by Malcolm X published in Spanish, appeared on the chart February 16 in fourth place and climbed to third place the following week.

More than \$1,000 worth of Pathfinder literature has been purchased by a Miami high school library from the local Pathfinder bookstore. A visit to the school librarian to introduce her to Pathfinder titles by Malcolm X resulted in sales of *The Balkan Wars* by Leon Trotsky, *Woman's Evolution* by Evelyn Reed, *The Eastern Airlines Strike* by Ernie Mailhot, *New International* no. 7 featuring "Opening Guns of World War III" by Jack Barnes, and almost every Pathfinder title by George Novack. The librarian then ordered more from the Pathfinder catalogue, including books in Spanish and French. "Pathfinder offers the kind of books young people are in-

terested in today," she said.

A Nevada school librarian reviewed two Pathfinder titles and recommended them for addition to school libraries in her district. "*Malcolm X Talks to Young People* is an excellent collection of speeches. ... As a teacher resource this book could be the springboard for class discussion," said the librarian.

The other title reviewed was *Genocide Against the Indians*. "To keep a balance in curriculum, this edition is good professional reading," she commented.

A meeting to celebrate the publication of *February 1965: The Final Speeches* by Malcolm X was held in Atlanta February 6 as part of Black History Month.

This recent Pathfinder title collects Malcolm X's speeches, statements, and interviews from the last three weeks of his life. "This book is a fantastic snapshot of Malcolm's life," said Vincent Forte, professor of history at Morehouse College and one of the featured speakers at the event.

Pathfinder books really do get around. *The German Revolution and the Debate on Soviet Power* is a Pathfinder title that is part of a collection that gathers the proceedings of the Communist International's first four congresses. The volume was reviewed by János Jemnitz, a leading Hungarian historian of that period.

While disagreeing sharply with the "very orthodox" and "oversimplified" introduction and commentary "by the New York editors," the reviewer lauds the book as a "powerful choice of historical source material."



# South Africa negotiations

Continued from Page 9

Law and Order Minister Hernus Kriel, a member of the government delegation to the multiparty conference, announced on the opening day that three suspects in the murder of the schoolchildren had been arrested. On March 8 the Natal Midlands region of the ANC announced that the three individuals arraigned were ANC members. The ANC is demanding that the three individuals arrested be ensured a fair trial.

A bus carrying ANC members to attend the March 8 court arraignment was ambushed; four people were killed and 16 injured.

Three suspects have been arrested in the March 3 killings as well, but police have not yet identified them.

At the government press conference Kriel flatly rejected any suggestion that state security officers or members of his own party were responsible for bloodshed in South Africa. "People in the National Party are not usually involved in violence," Kriel said.

Kriel's lies notwithstanding, the true face of the government's army officer corps and cops was exposed earlier the same week at an inquest by the Port Elizabeth Supreme Court into the bloody 1985 murders of Matthew Goniwe and three other activists in the democratic movement. All four had been active in the Eastern Cape, leading school boycotts and other protests. Goniwe and the others were found with multiple stab and bullet wounds and with their faces burned beyond recognition.

The murders occurred exactly two weeks after Gen. Joffel van der Westhuizen, currently South Africa's chief of military intelligence, had sent a top secret message to Gen. Johannes van Rensburg ordering "the permanent removal from society... as a matter of urgency" of Goniwe and others. A copy of the message was reproduced last year in the weekly *New Nation* published in Johannesburg.

Pretoria's top army spy testified he doesn't remember the message, but that if he sent it, the words "permanently remove from society" must have referred to "long-term detention." Van Rensburg told the court he had received the message.

Other government documents released in connection with the inquest take some of the shine off the de Klerk government's efforts to posture as a champion of freedom of the press by opposing the ANC's call for multiparty control over the SABC radio and TV network. Papers submitted to the court from an Eastern Cape military intelligence unit reveal that representatives of the "independent" SABC board participated in secret meetings that discussed Goniwe's political activity just weeks prior to the killings.

Building on the success of the Multiparty Planning Conference, the African National Congress is preparing for the next stage of the struggle to put an end to the apartheid regime and replace it with a nonracial, non-sexist, democratic South Africa.

ANC members are participating in union and community fights throughout the country, from the battle by teachers and students to end apartheid education to struggles by rural toilers against forced removal from their land and homes. ANC election campaigners are already canvassing neighborhoods to get out their political perspectives and educate people about how to ensure their right to vote.

The ANC has also announced that later in March it will organize a conference of the Patriotic Front of antiapartheid forces it initiated in October 1991; some 90 organizations attended the first gathering. Leaders of the Pan Africanist Congress, which withdrew two months later to protest the ANC's participation in Codesa, have publicly stated they are considering participation in the ANC-called conference.

At the same time, the ANC will also be actively helping to lead preparations by the 26-member Facilitating Committee for the next round of multiparty negotiations scheduled to begin no later than April 5.

The ANC will be doing so in the spirit urged by Ramaphosa in his remarks to the March 5 plenary: "In our deliberations, it is imperative that each of us proceed from the acknowledgment that we are the custodians of the interests of... the people of the country as a whole — Blacks and whites, those whose sweetest language is Afrikaans or English or Sotho or Zulu or Xhosa."

## MILITANT LABOR FORUMS

The Militant Labor Forum is a weekly free-speech meeting for workers, farmers, youth, and others. All those seeking to advance the fight against injustice and exploitation should attend and participate in these discussions on issues of importance to working people.

At the Militant Labor Forum you can express your opinion, listen to the views of fellow fighters, and exchange ideas on how to best advance the interests of workers and farmers the world over.

### CALIFORNIA

#### San Francisco

**U.S. Intervention in Bosnia: Will It Help End the Civil War?** Speaker: Ned Measel, Socialist Workers Party, member, United Auto Workers Local 2244. Sat., March 13, 7 p.m. 3284 23rd St. (near Mission). Donation: \$3. Tel: (415) 282-6255.

**The Famine in Africa: Who Is Responsible? What Can Be Done?** Panel discussion. Sat., March 20, 7 p.m. 3284 23rd St. (near Mission). Donation: \$3. Tel: (415) 282-6255.

### FLORIDA

#### Miami

**Abortion Rights under Attack: What Road to Defend a Woman's Right to Choose?** Speakers: Julia Dawson, North Miami National Organization for Women; Rosa Garmendia, Socialist Workers Party. Sat., March 13, 7:30 p.m. 137 NE 54th St. Donation: \$3. Tel: (305) 756-1020. Translation to Spanish and French.

### GEORGIA

#### Atlanta

**Clinton's Economic Plan: Who Profits? Who Pays?** Speaker: Bob Braxton, Socialist Workers Party, member, United Auto Workers Local 882. Sat., March 13, 7:30 p.m. 172 Trinity Ave. SW. Donation: \$3. Tel: (404) 577-4065.

**Environmental Racism: The Fight against**



Militant Labor Forum held at the Pathfinder bookstore in Boston. The *Boston Globe*, the city's major daily, published this picture in its February 14 issue. "Across the street from Fantasy Nails," said an accompanying article, "the light is still on at Pathfinder, a bookstore and political center. Books and pamphlets in the window... Downstairs, a group of 20 people discuss fascism in Germany and racist attacks on immigrant workers... The debate is hot."

**Pollution of Minority Communities.** Speakers: Eric Berg, United Farmworkers of America; Ed Smith, Citizens Against Hazardous Dumping; representative, Socialist Workers Party. Sat., March 20, 7:30 p.m. 172 Trinity Ave. SW. Donation: \$3. Tel: (404) 577-4065.

### IOWA

#### Des Moines

**South Africa: Challenges to the Democratic Movement.** Speaker: Mitchel Rosenberg, Socialist Workers Party, member, United Food and Commercial Workers Local 1149. Sat., March 13, 7:30 p.m. 2105 Forest Ave. Donation: \$3. Tel: (515) 246-8249.

### MINNESOTA

#### St. Paul

**Reportback from the February-March 1993 Coal Miners Strike.** Speaker: Chris Nisan, Socialist Workers Party, member, United Transportation Union Local 1000. Sat., March 13, 7:30 p.m. 508 N. Snelling Ave. Donation: \$3. Tel: (612) 644-6325.

### NORTH CAROLINA

#### Greensboro

**The Death Penalty: Is It the Solution to Crime?** A panel discussion. Sat., March 13, 7:30 p.m. 2000-C S. Elm-Eugene Street. Donation: \$3. Tel: (919) 272-5996.

### PENNSYLVANIA

#### Philadelphia

**Clinton's Economic Policy: "Shared Sacrifice" or Making Workers Pay?** Speakers: Sol Haas, Action Alliance of Senior Citizens; Helen Meyers, Socialist Workers Party, member, United Transportation Union. Sat., March 13, 7:30 p.m. 1906 South St. Donation: \$3. Tel: (215) 546-8218.

#### Pittsburgh

**Why Refugees Flee Haiti: First-hand Report on Conditions under Military Rule.** Speakers: Joseph Dieucel, former student at Baracleres school in Haiti; Julien Renaud, former student at

Jeremie school in Haiti; Linda Joyce, Socialist Workers Party, member, International Union of Electronic Workers. Sun., March 14, 7 p.m. 4905 Penn Ave. Donation: \$3. Tel: (412) 362-6767.

### TEXAS

#### Houston

**Clinton's Closed Door and the Rights of Haitians.** Speaker: Harvey McArthur, *Militant* correspondent who recently toured U.S.-run Haitian detention center in Guantanamo, Cuba. Sat., March 13, 7:30 p.m. 4806 Alameda. Donation: \$3. Tel: (713) 522-8054.

**Coal Miners Strike! Eyewitness Report from Coal Fields.** Speaker: Dick McBride, spent two weeks in Illinois coal fields with *Militant* reporting team. Sat., March 20, 7:30 p.m. 4806 Alameda. Donation: \$3. Tel: (713) 522-8054.

### WASHINGTON

#### Seattle

**Apartheid, the African National Congress, and the Struggle for Power.** Speaker: John Steele, attended African National Congress international solidarity conference in Johannesburg as part of *Militant* reporting team. Mon., March 22, 7 p.m. 1405 E. Madison. Donation: \$3. Tel: (206) 323-1755. Translation to Spanish.

### AUSTRALIA

#### Sydney

**Malcolm X, the Man and His Ideas.** Speaker: Craig Foster, Communist League. Sat., March 20, 6 p.m. 66 Albion St., Surry Hills. Donation: \$3. Tel: 02-281 3297.

### CANADA

#### Toronto

**Clinton and Mulroney: Rulers Make Workers Pay for World Capitalist Depression.** Speaker: Steve Penner, Central Committee member, Communist League. Sat., March 13, 7:30 p.m. 827 Bloor St. West. Donation: \$4. Tel: (416) 533-4324.

#### Vancouver

**Speak Out against Education Cutbacks.** A panel discussion. Sat., March 13, 7:30 p.m. 3967 Main St. (between 23rd and 24 Ave). Donation: \$4. Tel: (604) 872-8343.

### NEW ZEALAND

#### Auckland

**Filipino Youth Discuss Changes in World Politics.** Speaker: Ruth Gray, recently visited Philippines with *Militant* reporting team. Sat., March 20, 7 p.m. La Gonda Arcade, 203 Karangahape Rd. Donation: \$3. Tel: (9) 379-3075.

#### Wellington

**After the Australian General Elections: Working People Face the Bosses' Offensive.** Sat., March 20, 7 p.m. 23 Majoribanks St., Courtenay Pl. Donation: \$3. Tel: (4) 384-4205.

### SWEDEN

#### Stockholm

**The Right to Choose Abortion Is under Attack.** Speaker: Maria Hamberg, Communist League, member, Food Workers Union. Sat., March 13, 4 p.m. Vikingagatan 10 (T-bana St Eriksplan). Tel: (08) 31 69 33.

## IF YOU LIKE THIS PAPER, LOOK US UP

Where to find Pathfinder books and distributors of the *Militant*, *Perspectiva Mundial*, *New International*, *Nouvelle Internationale*, and *Nueva Internacional*.

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**CALIFORNIA:** Los Angeles: 2546 W. Pico Blvd. Zip: 90006. Tel: (213) 380-9460, 380-9640. San Francisco: 3284 23rd St. Zip: 94110. Tel: (415) 282-6255.

**CONNECTICUT:** New Haven: Mailing address: P.O. Box 16751, Baybrook Station, West Haven. Zip: 06516. Tel: (203) 772-3375.

**FLORIDA:** Miami: 137 N.E. 54th St. Zip: 33137. Tel: (305) 756-1020.

**GEORGIA:** Atlanta: 172 Trinity Ave. Zip: 30303. Tel: (404) 577-4065.

**ILLINOIS:** Chicago: 545 W. Roosevelt Rd. Zip: 60607. Tel: (312) 829-6815, 829-7018.

**IOWA:** Des Moines: 2105 Forest Ave. Zip: 50311. Tel: (515) 246-8249.

**MARYLAND:** Baltimore: 2905 Greenmount Ave. Zip: 21218. Tel: (410) 235-0013.

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**MINNESOTA:** Twin Cities: 508 N. Snelling Ave., St. Paul. Zip: 55104. Tel: (612) 875-0100.

**MISSOURI:** St. Louis: 1622 S. Broadway. Zip: 63104. Tel: (314) 421-3808.

**NEW JERSEY:** Newark: 141 Halsey. Mailing address: 1188 Raymond Blvd., Suite 222. Zip: 07102. Tel: (201) 643-3341.

**NEW YORK:** New York: 191 7th Ave. Zip: 10011. Tel: (212) 727-8421; 167 Charles St. Zip: 10014. Tel: (212) 366-1973.

**NORTH CAROLINA:** Greensboro: 2000-C S. Elm-Eugene St. Zip: 27406. Tel: (919) 272-5996.

**OHIO:** Cincinnati: P.O. Box 19484. Zip: 45219. Tel: (513) 221-2691. Cleveland: 1863 W. 25th St. Zip: 44113. Tel: (216) 861-6150.

**OREGON:** Portland: 2310 NE 8th #1. Zip: 97212. Tel: (503) 288-0466.

**PENNSYLVANIA:** Philadelphia: 1906 South St. Zip: 19146. Tel: (215) 546-8196. Pittsburgh: 4905 Penn Ave. Zip: 15224. Tel: (412) 362-6767.

**TEXAS:** Houston: 4806 Alameda. Zip: 77004. Tel: (713) 522-8054.

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**WASHINGTON, D.C.:** 523 8th St. SE. Zip: 20003. Tel: (202) 547-7557.

**WASHINGTON:** Seattle: 1405 E. Madison. Zip: 98122. Tel: (206) 323-1755.

**WEST VIRGINIA:** Morgantown: 242 Walnut. Mailing address: P.O. Box 203. Zip: 26507. Tel: (304) 296-0055.

### AUSTRALIA

**Sydney:** 19 Terry St., Surry Hills, Sydney NSW 2010. Tel: 02-281-3297.

### BARBADOS

**Bridgetown:** P.O. Box 891. Tel: (809) 436-7723.

### BRITAIN

**London:** 47 The Cut. Postal code: SE1 8LL.

Tel: 071-928-7993.

**Manchester:** Unit 4, 60 Shudehill. Postal code: M4 4AA. Tel: 061-839 1766.

**Sheffield:** 1 Gower St., Spital Hill, Postal code: S47HA. Tel: 0742-765070.

### CANADA

**Montreal:** 6566, boul. St-Laurent. Postal code: H2S 3C6. Tel: (514) 273-2503.

**Toronto:** 827 Bloor St. West. Postal code: M6G 1M1. Tel: (416) 533-4324.

**Vancouver:** 3967 Main St. Postal code: V5V 3P3. Tel: (604) 872-8343.

### ICELAND

**Reykjavik:** Klapparstig 26. Mailing address: P. Box 233, 121 Reykjavik. Tel: (91) 17513.

### MEXICO

**Mexico City:** Apdo. Postal 27-575, Col. Roma Sur. Mexico D.F.

### NEW ZEALAND

**Auckland:** La Gonda Arcade, 203 Karangahape Road. Postal Address: P.O. Box 3025. Tel: (9) 379-3075.

**Christchurch:** 593a Colombo St. (upstairs). Postal address: P.O. Box 22-530. Tel: (3) 365-6055.

**Wellington:** 23 Majoribanks St., Courtenay Pl. Postal address: P.O. Box 9092. Tel: (4) 384-4205.

### SWEDEN

**Stockholm:** Vikingagatan 10 (T-bana St Eriksplan). Postal code: S-113 42. Tel: (08) 31 69 33.



**Free papal advice** — The pope urged pregnant rape victims in Bosnia and Herzegovina not to have



Harry Ring

abortions. He urged the community to help the victimized women "transform an act of violence into an act of love and welcome." He also encouraged adoption of orphaned and abandoned children.

**You think you're crazy?** — The *New Zealand Herald* reported on the roach infestation and other problems stemming from the cutbacks in supplies and service at the National Women's Hospital in Auckland. The paper said, "The manager of maternity services at the hospital, Mrs. Anne Nightingale, said babies' supplies had been cut in a bid to help mothers adapt to the outside world."

**'Camelot's' bro** — "The FBI placed telephone wiretaps at [Martin Luther] King's home and office in the early and mid-1960s under written permission given by Attorney General Robert Kennedy." — News item.

**What else is new** — "Firms Pick Up Pieces in Bombing Aftermath — Those displaced by the World Trade Center blast try to set up shop elsewhere. Big firms appear to fare the best." — News headline.

**Take that** — A Los Angeles jury convicted Clark Baker, a city cop, of battery. He had arrested a Salvadoran youth for jaywalking. When the youth asked to read the citation, the cop kicked him in the gut three times, handcuffed him, and dragged him by his hair and by the cuffs. Baker was sentenced to 350 hours of community service.

**Security City** — *Harper's* magazine did a piece on Green Valley, a Nevada complex of middle-class and wealthy communities, all walled and gated. One wealthy resident was Joseph Weldon Smith, who was immortalized on TV after strangling his family. An ex-resident was George Hennard, who gunned down 23 people in a Texas cafeteria.

**Just a test** — A while back, the president of the Green Valley Community Assn. was caught allegedly burglarizing a model home. He made it back to his house and took refuge in the attic. But he fell through a floor panel

into the arms of the cops.

**'If dead, hang up'** — A Los Angeles Kaiser Permanente hospital has an automated phone system, with a recording telling you the numbers to press for various departments. The litany concludes with the instruction, "If this is a life-threatening emergency, please press 9."

**Touchy** — Saks Fifth Avenue, the pricey New York department store, is threatening suit against Sacks Thrift Avenue, a San Diego used clothing store, asserting "likely deception of the general public."

## Many hit by hurricane in Florida still homeless

BY MAUREEN COLETTA

MIAMI—The comical scene of blind building inspectors, their pockets stuffed with fake cash, led off an annual satirical parade here called the King Mango Strut. This year's theme of "The Big One" poked fun at Hurricane Andrew. Floats included mock contractors driving a Rolls Royce full of money bags with a sign asking "Have you been nailed by a roofer?" and simulated houses collapsing from an imaginary gust of wind.

While time, insurance, and relief aid have allowed some to make light of the hurricane and its aftermath, its impact deeply affects the lives of many south Dade County residents. Amidst the housing reconstruction boom, many workers are forced to live in plastic-roofed, patched-up homes.

Contrary to official estimates of 5,000 homeless, those active in the relief effort say the real number is nearly 20,000.

Hurricane Andrew, the costliest hurricane in U.S. history, caused losses of \$26 billion. The storm, which hit south Florida on Aug. 24, 1992, killed 22 people and devastated 300 square miles of Dade County. Winds gusting up to 165 miles per hour destroyed tens of thousands of homes and damaged many others. Over 82,000 businesses were demolished or damaged.

Local and national aid was slow in coming. The U.S. Army was sent in to set up tent cities and distribute food and water, alongside volunteer and Red Cross aid efforts. The military imposed a curfew, which only served to hamper residents searching for necessities and transportation to work. Many were arrested for violating it.

The army pulled out in early October, folded up the tent cities, and left many homeless. In December the Red Cross closed offices and consolidated into one south Dade location. The Federal Emergency Management Agency announced a January 20 deadline for filing for hurricane relief aid. Charity efforts of businesses and others have dried up as things return to "normal."

### A social and economic catastrophe

"Normal" life today, however, includes more shantytowns and tent cities, higher profits for construction companies, rent gouging and housing discrimination, and loss of jobs. Through ineffective government action and the normal workings of capitalism, what was a natural disaster has developed into a social and economic catastrophe of great proportions.

Aerial photographs of heavily hit areas show a clear pattern of man-made disaster. The hurricane did not destroy all homes equally. Newer and more flimsily built houses were leveled, while other subdivisions, sometimes across the street, survived the storm relatively intact. In a special report by the *Miami Herald* entitled "What Went Wrong?," reporters interviewed construction engineers and scientists from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) for clues to the disparate results.

Engineers told the *Herald* they found a lack of simple construction practices in the hardest hit areas that would have strengthened homes, allowing them to withstand hurricane winds.

These housing materials would have added only \$200-300 per building in cost, explained Crane Miller, a lawyer

who did a study of Hurricane Hugo for the NOAA. Hugo hit the Carolinas in 1989.

A 1985 state law required that buildings along Florida's coast be able to withstand 140-mile-per-hour winds. The powerful builders' association lobby fought to change the new code, claiming it drove housing prices too high. Within a year, the 1985 Coastal Zone Protection Act was rewritten. The statewide standard dropped to 110 miles per hour and 115 along the coast.

Construction companies are now reaping huge profits from cleanup and rebuilding contracts. Five companies working for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers netted \$11 million in profits.

Reconstruction has been proceeding as insurance checks come in, but 16,000 homeowners have not been able to collect their claims from insurance companies that have failed.

New home buyers, especially in Key Biscayne and Miami Beach, are finding they cannot get homeowners' insurance. This is a serious problem, since anyone who has a mortgage must buy insurance. Complaints of discrimination in housing have mounted and rents have risen dramatically.

### 'Militant' reporters visit Homestead

A *Militant* reporting team recently visited Homestead and Florida City, which were hit hard by the storm. The picture today is strikingly different than in the days immediately following the hurricane.

Giant irrigation systems spray green fields that last August were a wasteland of leveled crops and debris. Farm workers harvest vegetables. Truckloads of tomatoes arrive at rebuilt processing plants.

Hurricane Andrew caused \$400 million in damage to the fruit, vegetable, and ornamental nursery industry. Southern Florida produces one-half of all winter vegetables sold in the United States and 23,000 agricultural laborers work there.

The growers and the government acted to ensure that the industry would not go under. Federal farm loans were expedited and while it will take years to replace fruit trees and nurseries, 80 percent of row crops were planted.

To attract sufficient labor and compete with construction jobs, the growers and processors are paying higher wages than usual this season.

At the Everglades Labor Camp, where 1,500 mostly Mexican farm workers live, the mountains of smashed trailers and destroyed belongings have been replaced with federally funded used trailers, washers and dryers, and two free meals a day.

While there is plenty of work in the fields, a deep social crisis remains. The new trailers and the three existing labor camps house only about 20 percent of the farm workers.

Marie Gonder and her husband, a construction worker from South Carolina, are part of the army of homeless people. They now live with about 30 other families behind St. Ann's Mission in a tent city with showers, bathrooms, and a county-run medical clinic.

Marie explained that earlier they had lived at a lake near Homestead Air Force Base with about 300 families for weeks. "We had no sanitary facilities, no fresh water. People were getting sick," she said.

A group of 30 construction workers continues to live in one of dozens of camps still visible along the main highway. They set up tents on vacant land there to have access to building contractors. These workers, from Slidell, Louisiana, said that most camps are made up of workers who traveled to Florida from the same towns to find work in the reconstruction effort.

Deena Hover, who organizes the communal kitchen, showed the *Militant* reporters around the camp. Some tents have stoves, refrigerators, and TVs. There is one portable toilet, but no running water.

Other workers talked about some of the problems they face. "We have to watch out for the contractors who offer real high



Militant Roofing workers' camp in southern Florida. Months after Hurricane Andrew, thousands live in poor housing or are homeless.

wages. . . . They run off at the end of the week without paying," said one roofing worker.

Maureen Coletta is a member of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers in Miami.

## — 25 AND 50 YEARS AGO —



Tens of thousands of Polish students, joined for the first time by large numbers of workers, battled police for more than eight hours in the center of Warsaw yesterday.

The student demonstrations, which began March 8, were aimed at winning political and artistic freedom from Poland's bureaucratic rulers. The *New York Times* reported March 10 that students were chanting such slogans as, "More democracy!" "Down with censorship!" and "Gestapo!" (to the police). Another cry was "Long Live Czechoslovakia!" indicating that students were aware of the growing turmoil over liberalization in that country despite an almost total blackout of news from Prague.

The official Polish press has viciously attacked the students as "scum" and "hooligans." *Slowo Powszechnie* and other papers have made openly anti-Semitic attacks on the demonstrators, charging that the protests have been led by Jews and listing the names of some of the students who had been arrested who were Jewish.

The "riots" began when Warsaw University students met March 8 to demand the reinstatement of two students expelled last Jan. 31 for demonstrating against the closing of a classic anti-Czarist play, "Dziady," by 19th century poet Adam Mickiewicz.

The struggle for socialist democracy has been mounting among university students since 1965, initiated by radical Communist teachers and intellectuals and carried on by Communist youth after the initiators were

jailed or victimized for their forthright criticism of the party bureaucrats. Now this movement has taken to the streets and workers are beginning to participate.



March 20, 1943

The mine workers' fight for wage increases and a satisfactory contract, although it is far from finished, has already thrown a good deal of light, for the broad mass of American union men and women watching their struggle with the greatest interest and sympathy, on the present status of the labor movement caught in the vise of frozen wages and rising living costs.

It has also demonstrated that the employers, backed by all U.S. industrialists, grown fat with profits and full of self-confidence and arrogance, are depending on the administration and its agencies such as the War Labor Board to help them resist the justified demands of the United Mine Workers.

As in the great coal strike of 1941, the workers can see that the War Labor Board and similar agencies by which the workers were put into a wartime straitjacket, can survive only with the participation and support of the labor movement itself. The moment even one section of the labor movement challenges this seemingly imposing edifice, the house is in danger of collapse.

The first task of every militant, no matter what union he belongs to, is to work to get his union and its leaders on record in support of the mine workers' demands and any action which they may be forced to take to win those demands.



## Miners face down coal bosses

Peabody Holdings Co. president Sam Shiflett said it couldn't be done. Handing over information about secret company operations and land holdings to the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) "would result in a radical restructuring of the labor agreement," he declared. But a month after 7,000 UMWA members struck Peabody, and a day after the union pulled out 1,700 workers at mines whose owners belong to the Bituminous Coal Operators Association (BCOA), Peabody agreed to the union's demands.

The miners' victory in the first round of their fight for a decent contract is cause for all working people to celebrate. It has been a while since union members took on a big corporation, faced them down over an important issue, and took the momentum away from the bosses.

Peabody is the largest coal company in the United States, an industry giant. By disguising vast mining operations and land holdings, coal companies like Peabody shift production to nonunion operations and refuse to hire UMWA members at new mines. This practice, known as "double breasting," is a direct violation of the 1988 contract between the union and the BCOA, which guaranteed UMWA members three out of five jobs at new mining operations. The union insisted on this provision to cut across company plans to weaken and break the UMWA. The information on secret holdings requested by the union is crucial to negotiate a contract and enforce it.

The miners pushed back Peabody because they put up a fight. In communities throughout the coal fields where the strike was centered, support for the miners was strong. And UMWA members reached out for it by holding rallies, setting up family auxiliaries, and solidarity camps. When Peabody began running strikebreakers in Indiana, miners reported more calls coming into the strike center from unionists and other working people wanting to help.

While miners at Peabody and at other major coal companies that belong to the BCOA are now working under a 60-day extension of the 1988 contract, less than 30 days remain on a similar extension granted by the union to companies belonging to the Independent Bituminous Coal Bargaining Alliance. So the struggle may resume soon.

Unlike big-business newspapers, which rarely even mentioned the UMWA strike against Peabody, the *Militant* supports the mine workers' struggle and will continue its extensive coverage of their fight. Over the next several weeks supporters of the *Militant* will be traveling to coalfields across the country. They will be getting the miners' side of the story for future articles in the *Militant* and introducing UMWA members and their supporters to the paper. All readers of the *Militant* are urged to help in this effort and get out the truth about the struggles of working people.

## ANC gains ground in S. Africa

The African National Congress led the democratic forces to take another step forward on the road toward elections for a constituent assembly in South Africa during the March 5-6 Multiparty Planning Conference in Johannesburg. The broad participation in this conference, and the fact that all but one of the 26 delegations agreed to renewed negotiations on drafting a new constitution in the next month, show that the democratic movement continues to have the initiative.

The bloc between the rightists who call for "Afrikaner self-determination" and the defenders of the so-called homelands such as the Inkatha Freedom Party began to crack when all but the Conservative Party endorsed the resolution that set up the next stage of negotiations.

The position of the ruling National Party is weaker as well. The true role of the government's security forces in fostering violence and murdering anti-apartheid activists continues to come to light, further discrediting the Pretoria regime. At the same time, the ANC has continued to clearly explain the question of violence. When 16 people, including several children of a local Inkatha leader, were murdered in two attacks in Natal, the ANC delegation at the conference led in urging the adoption of a resolution submitted by Inkatha representatives condemning the slaughters.

The advances made by the democratic movement are the fruit of decades of struggle by working people in South

Africa, from the 1976 Soweto rebellion to mass actions before and after the government was forced to release Nelson Mandela from prison in 1990. It is through this mass movement that the ANC and its allies won the strength to draw more forces to the bargaining table, isolate the die-hard racists, and compel the regime to agree to begin dismantling the apartheid system.

ANC leaders have pointed time and again to the importance of international solidarity in reaching the stage where one-person, one-vote elections are on the agenda. The ANC has also been demonstrating in practice its willingness to give solidarity, as well as receive it. The organization recently launched a campaign to protest the counter-revolutionary war being waged against the Angolan people by UNITA, which has received support from the U.S. and South African governments.

The revolutionary democratic forces in South Africa deserve the full solidarity of working people around the world. By building activities that help more people understand and support the course charted by the ANC leadership, such as the tour of young leaders from South Africa underway in the United States now, workers and youth around the world can be part of bringing the goal of a nonracial, nonsexist, democratic republic in that country closer to reality. The labor movement must demand that the South African government accede to the ANC's proposals.

## Clinton foreign policy fiascos

The recent moves by Bill Clinton's administration in the former Yugoslavia, Somalia, and Haiti point to one fiasco after another in Washington's foreign policy.

- The airdrops of supplies from 10,000 feet by U.S. military aircraft in eastern Bosnia have turned out to be a major failure.

Washington's airdrops have prompted renewed fighting and the deaths of hundreds of civilians. Some estimate the action has cost more lives than it has saved.

The carnage in Bosnia has been continuing on a large scale for months, with Clinton and others in ruling circles insisting that the United States government should take firm action where the European Community powers had proved unwilling or incapable of doing so. During the election campaign, Clinton called for bombing Serbian airfields, and condemned George Bush for staying away from using military force in Bosnia.

The spectacle of U.S. planes dropping pallets from a great height and in the pitch dark to avoid anti-aircraft fire, thus ensuring the inaccuracy of the drops, highlights the U.S. rulers' hypocrisy in their claims that they are out to defend the victims of the Yugoslav carnage. More people have died as a result of the drops. The U.S. government is once again unable to claim the moral high ground in this case.

Washington, in fact, sees little point in seriously endangering its forces in Bosnia. It has instead struck an alliance with Moscow, which supports the regime in Belgrade, leading to a de facto division of Bosnia. Clinton has thrown his support behind the United Nations peace plan, which carves up Bosnia primarily to the benefit of the Serbian- and Croatian-based armed gangsters who initiated this conflict against the interests of all working people of the region.

Washington's motive is to prevent its competitors among other imperialist powers — especially the government of Germany with a big stake in Croatia — from getting an advantage through greater involvement and investments in the various republics.

- The Somalia intervention, begun only three months

ago in the final days of the Bush administration and continued unchanged by Clinton, now looks dramatically different from what it was first touted to be — a "humanitarian" intervention, supposedly with the sole purpose of feeding starving people. It was this hope that convinced whole layers of pacifist-minded forces, who had opposed earlier U.S. interventions abroad, to back the Somalia action. But this operation now looks far more like what it has always been: an exercise in colonial domination, with growing hostility to the U.S. presence, and frequent killings by U.S. marines of Somali youth on the streets of Mogadishu.

- After condemning as "cruel" and illegal Bush's policy of forcibly returning Haitians who risked their lives to flee a repressive regime, Clinton has made a total turnabout on this question. His administration now defends before the Supreme Court the same policy it chided Bush about — the forcible repatriation of tens of thousands of Haitian refugees fleeing the terror of a military dictatorship.

Each in its own way, these fiascos and policy reversals bring sharply to focus some central features of U.S. imperialism in today's world of war and economic depression.

Clinton's foreign policy moves have nothing to do with stopping atrocities in Bosnia, saving starving children in Somalia, or helping Haitian refugees fleeing repression. The U.S. rulers' hearts go out only to cold cash, not human misery.

Washington is on a drive, however, despite these fiascos, to intervene and exert a decisive influence on the course of events throughout the world, motivated above all by the need to keep one step ahead of its rivals, especially the rulers of Germany and Japan.

These events show both the capacity for cold-blooded brutality and the utter hypocrisy of spokespeople for an imperialist system in decline, which, despite its weaknesses, remains deadly dangerous for humanity. They point to the need for a movement of workers and farmers that can and must take power out of the hands of the warmakers and replace it with the worldwide rule of working people.

## U.S. recovery takes place during world depression

BY NAOMI CRAINE

The latest statistics confirm that the nearly two-year upturn in the U.S. business cycle is continuing. At the same time, more working people are depending on food stamps than ever before, while joblessness and underemployment remain high. This is what a recovery in the midst of a worldwide economic depression means.

The gross domestic product, that is, the amount of goods and services produced in the United States, rose by an annual rate of 4.8 percent in the last three months of 1992 — the biggest increase in five years. For the year as a whole, the growth rate was 2.1 percent. New orders for durable goods rose 9 percent between November and December.

Unemployment figures have been creeping down as well. The official jobless rate fell two-tenths of 1 percent in January, to 7.1 percent, and to 7 percent in February.

These figures don't tell the whole story, however. In January the drop in the unemployment rate was entirely due to a decrease in the work force. If the number of working people seeking employment had remained the same that month, the jobless rate would have risen.

There were reportedly 380,000 more jobs available in February. But, in an indication of growing underemployment, the number of part-time workers who said they would be working full-time if they had a choice climbed by 348,000 the same month. Furthermore, many of the new jobs are temporary positions. The unemployment rate remains higher than at the end of the 1990-91 recession.

The same week the employment figures for February were released, a survey by the Department of Agriculture reported that 10.4 percent of the population of the United States now relies on food stamps — the highest level since the program began in 1964.

Nor is the end in sight for the wave of mass layoffs by major employers. The aircraft manufacturer Boeing announced in mid-February that it plans to cut its work force 28,000 jobs, or 20 percent, over the next year.

The length of the factory workweek has risen to 41.4 hours, the highest level since 1966. The amount of overtime and labor productivity are also on the increase.

The reason this economic upturn doesn't look much like what working people think of as recovery is that it is happening during a world depression. This longer-term depression continues despite ups and downs in the business cycle in any particular capitalist country.

"Looking across the globe, there is little sign that sustainable recovery is at hand," wrote James Davidson in a February 11 column in the *Wall Street Journal*. "Banking systems are strained everywhere. Europe and Japan are rapidly weakening. The downturn of the early 1990s has been a depression," he continued.

A February 27 meeting of finance ministers and central bankers from major imperialist powers highlighted the interrelated and competing nature of capitalist economies today. At the meeting of the Group of Seven, which consists of Britain, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, and the United States, U.S. treasury secretary Lloyd Bentsen tried to pressure the German and Japanese governments to adopt policies more favorable to U.S. capital.

Bentsen failed to get any commitment from Japan to promote spending, and therefore imports of U.S. goods. Japan is struggling with what a *Financial Times* article called "its worst financial crisis in decades."

The German central bank, the Bundesbank, is resisting pressures from the governments of the United States and many members of the European Community to lower its interest rates. It has kept its rates high in an attempt to finance reunification with eastern Germany and stabilize the country's economy. The German economy, however, has sunk to a "post-reunification downturn," as the *Financial Times* put it.

### Correction

Two errors appeared in the article in the February 26 *Militant* on Clinton's nominee for U.S. attorney general, former Miami prosecutor Janet Reno. Both concerned the case of Tony Thomas, who was assaulted while serving as an usher during a meeting at Florida International University (FIU) where two members of the Cuban Union of Young Communists spoke in October.

The article stated that Reno's office had not contacted witnesses to the assault on Thomas prior to their first meeting with him. In fact, they had interviewed the witnesses whose names Thomas had given them.

After talking with Marcel Felipe, the individual who had punched Thomas, as well as witnesses Felipe provided, the prosecutor's office told Thomas they would drop the case unless he came up with more evidence. They did this without going back and checking Felipe's claims with any of the witnesses Thomas provided, who included a university police officer who witnessed the assault.

Thomas provided the prosecutor's office with further witnesses, several of whom came to light as a result of the investigation FIU authorities were pursuing against Felipe. These included the head of campus security and the Director of Student Activities at the university.

It was this submission of additional witnesses that forced Reno's office to keep the investigation open, not, as the previous article had stated, the subsequent ruling by FIU of a one-year suspension against Felipe.



# FBI targets immigrants in N.Y. bombing

BY MARTIN KOPPEL

The big-business media and the FBI have used the explosion that shook New York's World Trade Center February 26 to whip up a campaign against "terrorism." Six days after the blast FBI agents and other cops arrested Mohammed Salameh, a Palestinian immigrant worker who lives in Jersey City, New Jersey, and charged him in connection with the bombing. He has been jailed without bail.

The FBI also arrested Ibrahim Elgabrowni, a carpenter, in his Brooklyn, New York, home. He too is being detained without bail, although police say they have no evidence linking him to the explosion. Federal cops arrested three more men near a Brooklyn mosque and have raided several homes of Egyptian immigrants in Jersey City and New York City.

"Radical Muslim seized as bomber" was the screaming headline in the March 5 *New York Post*.

Alleging that the 25-year-old man sometimes attended religious services at a mosque in Jersey City, a *Post* article painted a lurid picture: "They're supposed to be houses of worship—but three area mosques appear to have been the breeding ground for the heinous plot that culminated in last week's lethal blast at the World Trade Center, according to investigators."

The mosques, located in Jersey City and Brooklyn, are led by Sheik Omar Abdul Rahman, whom the media has portrayed as a "Muslim fundamentalist" cleric.

## 'Media have found scapegoat'

At a news conference, a member of the Jersey City mosque, Mohammed Magib, responded, "We are outraged at the way this mosque is being assaulted by the media and others." He added, "The media and the FBI have apparently found their scapegoat," referring to Salameh. "They were under intense pressure to make an arrest."

The events of the week following the explosion indicate that federal authorities have been guided not by the pursuit of facts but by political considerations.

The explosion that ripped through the World Trade Center towers, a giant financial and commercial center in lower Manhattan, killed five people, injured 1,000 others, and left thousands of office workers without a



Members of Jersey City, New Jersey, mosque condemn media and FBI 'antiterrorism' campaign. The mosque, which is under FBI surveillance, was vandalized March 5.

job. The powerful blast in an underground parking garage incinerated cars and left a mountain of concrete rubble and metal shreds.

The destruction was so extensive that authorities have had a hard time coming up with any evidence of the cause of the explosion, although they have mobilized a top-level team of bomb experts and 70 agents from the FBI; the federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms; and New York police department's bomb squad.

For example, they have issued contradictory reports on the bomb material used. Initial reports described it as plastic explosives. Other reports attributed it to a mixture of fuel oil and fertilizer. A third theory floated by cops is that 500-1,500 pounds of dynamite was the explosive because of the discovery of traces of nitrates at the scene.

One investigator remarked, however, "Finding nitrates at a place where an explosion took place is like finding soot at a fire scene." Many other substances contain nitrates, from salami to playing cards.

Other conflicting "leaks" to the press reported that investigators had found pieces of a brown van "that appeared to have been very close to the explosion or even involved with it in some way." Later they claimed to have

found a thin strip of metal that was traced—on the basis of a partial vehicle identification number "enhanced" by the FBI—to a yellow van rented from a Ryder Truck Rental Company in Jersey City.

One fact is certain, though. From the beginning authorities were determined to pin the explosion on "foreign terrorists."

## Speculation about 'foreign terrorists'

A typical example of the speculation thrown about in the media was an article in the March 8 issue of *Time* magazine entitled "Who could have done it." It ran through detailed descriptions of "the Balkan factions," referring to Serbs, Croats, and Bosnian Muslims; "Palestinian factions," in particular the Hamas organization; "Iran, Iraq, Libya"; and "Russian nationalists." Other media reports listed the Irish Republican Army, Peru's Shining Path, and Colombia's drug cartel.

Under this pretext, federal cops have launched a nationwide campaign of spying and harassment against a wide range of legal political organizations, especially Palestinian organizations in the United States.

The FBI finally decided to arrest Salameh, portrayed in the media as a "member of a violent Islamic fundamentalist sect." The govern-

ment is using this campaign to try to chip away at democratic rights. Calling the explosion "the single most destructive act of terrorism ever committed on American soil," federal prosecutor Gilmore Childres said the government "is now exploring the constitutionality of the death penalty" against Salameh and others who may be arrested later.

Salameh was arrested when he went to the Ryder truck rental agency and asked for a refund of the \$400 cash deposit he had put down on a Ford van he said had been stolen the night before the explosion at a supermarket parking lot. The agency gave him the runaround and as a result he went to the office three times demanding his refund.

## Unlikely bomber

Would a bomber, the object of a highly publicized FBI search, stick his neck out to the point of returning three times to a rental agency that would clearly link him to a truck used in a massive car bombing? All for a \$400 refund? So far the cops have given no credible explanation.

This has not stopped the police from making numerous allegations to bolster their claim that Salameh is a dangerous terrorist. One is their attempt to link him to Sheik Abdul Rahman, a blind man who was arrested in Egypt a decade ago and charged in the assassination of Egyptian president Anwar el-Sadat; he was acquitted.

Another effort at guilt by association is the repeated statements in the media that Salameh attended the same mosque as Sayyid Nosair, who was accused of killing Israeli right-wing leader Meir Kahane in 1990. Nosair was acquitted of the murder charge but was sentenced on gun possession and assault charges.

FBI agents also ransacked the Brooklyn apartment of another man, Ibrahim Elgabrowni, supposedly looking for evidence that might link him to the bombing. They carted off stacks of his books, papers, a typewriter, and other personal belongings. Then they arrested Elgabrowni, accusing him of attempting to punch an agent.

Seizing on the World Trade Center bombing, an editorial in the Newark *Star-Ledger* demanded tighter immigration laws. It also called for expanding the "register of undesirable organizations" proscribed by the U.S. government.

## LETTERS

### Protest in Argentina

On February 17 more than 7,000 people gathered in front of the Congress to protest the latest attempt of Argentine president Carlos Menem's administration to privatize the existing Social Security System. The rally was organized by the Central Organization of the Retirees within the recently formed CTA (Congress of Argentinean Workers). The CTA, formally organized in November of 1992, is emerging as an alternative workers' organization to the CGT (General Confederation of Workers). The latter has monopolized the control of the majority of the work force since its formation in 1930. The CGT, through its official bureaucrats, has backed up all the successive privatizations carried through by the present administration offering neither organized resistance nor alternative plans. Some of the state owned monopolies privatized since President Menem rose to power in April of 1989 are: railroads, the telephone company, gas and electricity, the oil company, and Argentinean Airlines. The CTA integrates the most disenfranchised sectors of the working class, offering an alternative to the neoliberal policies of the current government.

They present a clearly anti-imperialist and anticapitalist program. Other organizations represented in the rally were: Mothers of Plaza de Mayo, MAS (Movement Towards Socialism), Frente del Sur (reorganization of the previous Communist Party, PO (Workers' Party) and POR (Workers' Revolutionary Party).

An effort is underway to gather one million signatures showing opposition to the proposed privatization of the Social Security System. Cristina Camusso, CTA leader, indicated that although the million signatures will not force the government into a plebiscite, it will give the workers moral strength to further their struggle.

When asked to comment about the increasing mobilization of the retirees, President Menem said, "If they are strong enough to march, they should be strong enough to go back to work."

Alejandra Aranovich  
Buenos Aires, Argentina

### Studying socialism

I have found your journal the *Militant* very useful for my studies of socialism. I would be very grateful if you would kindly send some back issues of the above mentioned journal at a concessionary rate.

J.S.  
Professor, University of Kelaniya  
Sri Lanka

### War in the Balkans

The recent events in the Balkans and an ad for the book on Trotsky's wartime correspondence during the Balkan Wars of 1912-13 in the *Militant* inspired me to reread this illuminating collection of worker journalism.

Then as now, the real culprits are the imperialist ambitions of the Western super-powers and their pretentious petty puppets in the rulers of the truncated balkdoms of Bosnia, Serbia, Croatia, Skopje,

and Kosovo—each with its private army of gangsters masquerading under the guise of bringing liberation to the people. In fact just as Trotsky described how the faked bureaucrats, kings, and generals of the 1912 Balkan states promised freedom and millions of francs, marks, and pounds in development and brought, instead, devastated villages and ruined crops, mass graves of massacred civilians, amputated troops, and cholera, so do these modern misleaders—whether it is Izetbegovic in Bosnia, Milosevic in Serbia, or Tudjman in Croatia—carve a picture of useless human destruction.

Imperialist intervention in the form of placing U.S. troops in Macedonia, as a recent *New York Times* article encouraged, or weapons drops to the embattled Muslims of Bosnia will only guarantee more misery and war for the Balkan peoples. It is hard to imagine that Albania, Greece, and Bulgaria would stand by with the threat of war on their borders. The road forward is one of cooperation between the Balkan working classes: Greek, Bulgar, Romanian, Albanian, Muslim, Croat, and Serbian. They must demand that pre-war borders and populations be respected as well as the minority rights of all peoples living within their borders.

The legacy of the 1945 Yugoslav revolution and the spirit of the Greek Civil War communist fighters must be incorporated into a new Balkan federation of the peoples which once and for all will end the bloodletting of similar peoples with the same social, economic, and po-

litical needs and the same enemy: Western imperialism and its profiteering market wizards. Re-reading Trotsky's *Balkan Wars* is a reminder of how much we have to accomplish.

George Kontanis  
Bronx, New York

### Protests in Turkey

The murder of investigative reporter and writer Ugur Mumcu continues to dominate the political life of Turkey. The internationally renowned journalist was appreciated here for his strong secularist ideas and outspoken criticism of human rights abuses, for which he was sentenced to seven years in jail in the 1970s. His murder on January 24 was claimed by two Islamic terrorist organizations and was the latest among more than a dozen journalists killed, mostly in the southeastern region of Turkey.

Hundreds of thousands participated in demonstrations in most major cities, protesting the murder and the increase in terrorist attacks by Islamic religious forces. In Ankara nearly 500,000 took part in the January 27 funeral procession, which turned into a militant response in defense of secularism. "Down with Shariah" and "Turkey will never be Iran" were among the main slogans shouted by the angry marchers. Other slogans were "Hand-in-Hand Against Fascism," "Catch those responsible—Make them pay" and "Down with Hezbollah-Contra-guerrilla."

Hezbollah, a radical Islamist organization, has been accused in re-

cent years, especially by pro-Kurdish rights activists, of collaborating with the "contra-guerrilla" units of the Turkish Army's Special Forces Command war against Kurdish fighters in the Southeast. Mumcu was among those who tried to expose this linkage, especially in the latest killings of journalists.

Among the slogans of the demonstrations, both in Ankara and in Istanbul, were "Death to U.S. imperialism" and "End to state terrorism." The U.S. has a large military base in the above region and is widely known here for its collaboration with the Turkish army, which since 1984 faces a Kurdish guerrilla struggle that so far has claimed the lives of many thousands.

Islamic political forces in this country have been identified with fascism for their terrorist attacks and because of their collaboration—which includes the formation of an electoral bloc—with fascist parties. In the demonstration in Istanbul, among the marchers were Iranians. Over one million live in this city and most of them fled Iran after the Islamic Republic was consolidated there.

Bobbis Beyoglu  
Istanbul, Turkey

The letters column is an open forum for all viewpoints on subjects of general interest to our readers. Please keep your letters brief. Where necessary they will be abridged. Please indicate if you prefer that your initials be used rather than your full name.



## Workers in Australia demonstrate against new antiunion legislation

BY PAUL GREY  
AND RON POULSEN

MELBOURNE, Australia—Hundreds of thousands of workers throughout Victoria participated in a one-day strike or four-hour work stoppage March 1 to protest new anti-union legislation. On that day the Victoria state government of Premier Jeff Kennett of the Liberal Party enacted its Employee Relations Act, ending state awards between workers and employers.

The state awards, agreements negotiated between the government, employers, and the unions, cover wages and working conditions of 1.2 million workers. They are now frozen while negotiations are held with employers for individual or workplace agreements.

The centerpiece of the strike was a demonstration of 75,000 trade unionists, young people, and others called by the Victorian Trades Hall Council. Workers rallied outside Parliament House in Melbourne, the Victoria capital.

Contingents of unionists from all the major industrial unions attended, including the Metal and Engineering Workers Union (MEWU), the Textile, Clothing and Footwear Union, and members of the Vehicle Builders Employees Federation from auto plants owned by Ford, Toyota, and GM Holden. Building unions, including a contingent of women working in construction, took part in the march. The largest union representation was by 16,000 teachers, who are protesting more than 60 school

closures and education cuts.

"With one million unemployed across Australia, bosses will be able to threaten and con workers out of state awards and into individual contracts," said Les Willmott, a member of the Plumbers and Gas-fitters Employees Union. "If you don't take what's on offer there is always someone who will."

Since the October elections, the Kennett government has led a frontal assault on the unions, cutting penalty (overtime) rates and severely restricting the right to strike. It has outlawed industrial action during the lifetime of any state award or employment agreement. Strikes have to be decided by secret ballot and police will be instructed to limit pickets to six people.

Examples of proposed new employment

contracts were released by the opposition Labor Party February 23. Workers at Pyramid Hill Bush Nursing Hospital have lost all penalty rates, as have workers at Westco Jeans. The Westco agreement extends the list of offenses the company can use to fire employees to include the unauthorized distribution of written material.

Some 3,500 school cleaners were recently fired by the government; 1,700 were reemployed under private contracts. A new round of public sector redundancies (lay-offs) was announced on February 24. Ten thousand jobs will be cut, in addition to 12,500 previously announced.

Many of those attending the March 1 demonstration had participated in a previous action of over 100,000 last November. For others this was their first demonstration.

Assistant secretary of the Australian Congress of Trade Unions Jennie George addressed the rally at the end of the demonstration. She said that if a Liberal/National Party coalition wins the upcoming federal elections "what you see in Victoria will be multiplied across the length and breadth of Australia."

Ron Poulsen, Communist League candidate for Senate from New South Wales, participated in the March 1 demonstration alongside campaign supporters. "The need for such actions will grow in the future as the rulers deepen their anti-working-class assault, driven by the growing economic crisis," Poulsen said. "Whichever party—Liberal or Labor—wins the March 13 federal elections, there will be an acceleration of the attacks on our wages, conditions, and rights. In the face of the capitalist offensive, workers will need to unite in struggle to defend our common interests internationally."

The Communist League election campaign is proposing that the labor movement mobilize to fight for a shorter working week with no loss in pay, as a primary means of combating mass unemployment and the competitive pressures this causes among workers.

The day before the strike, hundreds of protesters marched through Melbourne to oppose the Kennett government's proposed new poll tax of \$100 to be imposed on homeowners.

In addition to the action in Victoria, members of the MEWU in four states across Australia participated in a one-day strike in solidarity with workers in Victoria, pressing their demand for a 6 percent wage increase.

*Ron Poulsen is a member of the Food Preservers' Union at Streets Ice Cream in Melbourne.*

## German steelworkers protest layoffs

BY LÜKO WILLMS

FRANKFURT, Germany — Twenty thousand steelworkers and their supporters turned out in Dortmund February 17 to protest layoffs and plant closures. Steelworkers, miners, students, retirees, and many others marched with torches to the rally site. Workers in Duisburg-Rheinhausen and Eisenhüttenstadt also rallied the same day.

The actions were in response to an announcement by the recently merged steelmakers Krupp and Hoesch that either the Krupp mill in Duisburg-Rheinhausen or the Hoesch mill in Dortmund will be closed soon. One of the mills "needs to be sacrificed to ensure the survival of our steel business," said Hans Wilhelm Grasshoff, chairman of Hoesch. Overall, he said, the company needs to reduce its capacity by 20 percent. Germany's largest steelmaker, Thyssen Stahl, also announced plans to cut 4,500 jobs in four plants.

The steelworkers' demonstrations won support from many other working people. In Dortmund 2,000 miners joined the rally. One of their signs read, "Miners + steelworkers = unbeatable."

Wilhelm Ehlers, a 62-year-old retiree, told a local newspaper he came to the demonstration because "I worked long years in the Krupp steel mill in Hagen. Even though I am no longer active, I came to show my solidarity. I have grandchildren who still want to find jobs in this region."

"We came with 100 people," said Dieter Kroll, a worker at the Thyssen steel mill in Duisburg-Hamborn.

In Eisenhüttenstadt, located in eastern Germany, workers carried a banner that read, "Steelworkers in East and West — stay united." One worker there commented, "I see only one solution: to fight. Maybe our struggle here looks somewhat feeble, but in the course of it we will learn to fight as the steelworkers in the old West Germany did."

Some of the workers in Dortmund carried out a 13-hour overnight blockade of the main road through the city. Police rerouted traffic around the demonstration. Regional officials decided this was the best approach, as banning the street action would make an already tense situation worse.

### Steel industry in crisis

The steel industry in Germany, as in the rest of Europe, is in a deep crisis. Much more steel is being produced than can be sold profitably. Ruprecht Vondran, chairperson of the industry association, said German steelmakers will slash 30,000 jobs in the west and 10,000 in the eastern region. Overall, European steel bosses have already pledged to cut production by 15 million tons, and are debating much further cuts. German mills account for about one-third of steel production in Europe.



Steelworkers protest plant closures and layoffs in Dortmund, Germany.

Social Democratic politicians are calling for protectionist measures against cheaper steel imports from Eastern European countries. Some also complain that German steelmakers should not be forced to make larger production cuts than their competitors in the European Community. The officialdom of IG Metall, the metal workers union, is calling for a "National Steel Conference" of government officials, steel bosses, and trade unions to find a way to protect the German steel industry.

Workers across Germany are beginning to respond to the impact of the cutbacks.

When Krupp management announced that plants in Hagen and Siegen would be threatened if other steel companies do not agree to reduce their work forces, workers there took to the streets.

Three thousand steelworkers in Siegen struck for 24 hours February 18. In Hagen 1,500 blockaded one of the main streets for six hours the same day.

Steelworkers throughout the country are planning further actions in the coming weeks. IG Metall has called a national demonstration in Bonn for March 26.

## Northwest Airlines demands new wage cuts

BY KIP HEDGES

MINNEAPOLIS — In what amounted to an ultimatum to all union members at Northwest Airlines, management gave pilots, flight attendants, and ground service crews until March 10 to approve the company's "last, best offer" in the current round of contract negotiations. The company's concession demands include an average 10 to 15 percent wage cut for three years, employee payment of 15 percent on insurance premiums, and a 20 percent reduction in accrual of vacation time.

For many members of the International Association of Machinists (IAM), the largest union at Northwest, this offer would mean at least \$100 less in pay per week. In exchange for these concessions, union members would receive 20 percent of all common stock and three union representatives would be placed on the company's 15-member board of directors.

The IAM represents 26,000 mechanics, cleaners, baggage handlers, and ticket agents at Northwest. Many were angered by the company's offer and plan to vote against it. Ramp worker Bob Krueger explained, "They'll get our wages down, then the other airlines will do the same. Then they will come back to us again for more. There's no end to it until we fight back."

"People are steaming at the idea of a concession contract," reported Jim Lyle, an IAM member who works at Northwest in Detroit. "We've seen that these concessionary contracts at TWA, United, and Pan Am don't save jobs. When will it stop? If we don't start fighting now we'll end up with a USAir-type contract."

IAM members at USAir accepted a concession contract that included a pay cut, reduced health benefits, and work-rule changes after a six-day strike last October.

Some workers fear that without conces-

sions they will lose their jobs because the airline would have to close.

The top officialdom of the three largest unions at Northwest, the IAM, the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, and the Airline Pilots Association, fostered this idea by previously agreeing to \$900 million in concessions to "save the airline." In exchange they asked for 80 percent ownership and five seats on the board of directors.

Over the last 3 years Northwest has lost \$900 million dollars due to intense industry competition and the world economic crisis.

To solve its problems Northwest, like all major airlines in the U.S., has implemented layoffs and cut wages and benefits. Major concessions have recently been forced on workers at TWA, USAir, and Alaska Airlines. Delta, a nonunion carrier, unilaterally imposed wage cuts on its workers.

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